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ABSTRACT

This resource pack of 11 units is designed to help trainers and postsecondary and continuing education staff meet the needs of special needs students in Great Britain. The pack aims to enhance the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and confidence of staff working with special needs students; indicate how staff and learners may assist the processes of integration and progression; and provide a flexible, process-oriented approach to staff training. The pack consists of a user's guide, introductory element, resources section, and eight elements of information and exercises on the following subjects: curriculum/training program design and evaluation; devising individual learning programs; assessment and review; training/teaching and learning strategies; design and adaptation of learning materials; technical aids and information technology; guidance and support; and sources of help and advice. (SK)

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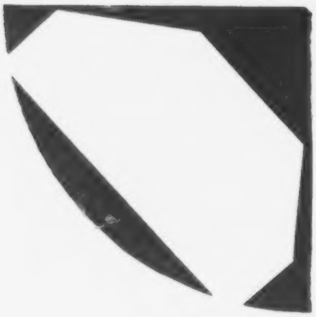

LEARNING SUPPORT

A staff development resource pack for those working with learners who have special needs.

EMPLOYMENT DEPARTMENT GROUP
TRAINING
AGENCY

FEU

Skill
NATIONAL BUREAU FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
Formerly the National Bureau for Handicapped Students

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LEARNING
SUPPORT

A staff development resource pack for those working with learners who have special needs.

By SALLY FARADAY and RICHARD HARRIS

LEARNING SUPPORT is the result of a Training Agency sponsored project carried out jointly by FEU and Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities.

The pack provides a range of practical staff development activities together with a User's Guide.

LEARNING SUPPORT will help to prepare staff to work with learners with a range of special needs, particularly those with learning difficulties who may be in FE or on training programmes.

LEARNING SUPPORT consists of 11 units in an easy-to-carry pack:

- User's Guide
- Introductory Element
- Element 2. Curriculum/Training Programme Design and Evaluation Strategies
- Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes
- Element 4. Assessment and Review
- Element 5. Training/Teaching and Learning Strategies
- Element 6. Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials
- Element 7. Technical Aids and Information Technology
- Element 8. Guidance and Support
- Element 9. Sources of Help and Advice
- Resources Section

The pack provides valuable training materials for both experienced practitioners and those new to this area of work.

LEARNING SUPPORT is the successful result of collaboration between three agencies: FEU – a curriculum agency; Skill: The National Bureau for Student's with Disabilities – a voluntary organisation; and the Training Agency. The pack provides ideal material for inter-agency training at local and regional levels by using existing networks or by creating new ones.

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LEARNING
SUPPORT

A staff development resource pack for those working with learners who have special needs

USER'S GUIDE

By Sally Faraday and Richard Harris

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FOREWORD

The staff development needs of teachers and trainers working with learners with special needs were given recognition in *A 'Special' Professionalism* (Stafford, HMSO, 1987) and there could be no better introduction to **Learning Support** than an extract from Chapter II of that report.

> 'If further educational provision is based on the idea of equal opportunity for all, those with special educational needs have the same rights to continue their education as their peers. Their needs in this context are 'special' in the sense that they will require additional support in order for them to be able to take advantage of an equal opportunities policy.'

Once this basic right is accepted, says the report, then:

> 'The central question is not how students with special needs can be placed in mainstream colleges but how the colleges can adapt in order to provide for a wider range of students.'

The same right and the same question hold true for training provision. The report goes on to spell out the implications for the staff involved in the work:

> 'It . . . requires a reappraisal of attitudes to dispel the mystique surrounding the education of students with special needs as something that is essentially different from all other teaching and that is undertaken by teachers who are themselves in some way different. Integration challenges the notion that students with special needs require the expertise of specialist teachers and institutions whose boundaries are well defined, but implies extending the knowledge and skills of all teachers, thus enabling them to respond appropriately to individual need.'

This same concern with meeting individual needs and supporting 'mainstream' staff who are attempting to do that, can be found in documents produced by the Training Agency (formerly the MSC). In *YTS Special Training Needs – A Code of Practice* (MSC, 1988), the approach is clear; the 'mainstream' YTS design framework provides a good basis for planning programmes for young people with special training needs. The section on programme design adds:

> 'Managing agents should ensure that individual training plans take account of the principles of *flexibility* and *progression* and are structured to meet special training needs. In this way all young people, including those with special training needs, will be able to benefit fully from their YTS experience.'

Good practice is seen as the capacity to accommodate many learning needs by staff who have developed a range of training strategies.

Learning Support is the outcome of a successful collaboration between three national organisations that aims to support that good practice by extending the knowledge and skills of teachers and trainers to enable them to meet individual needs. It was conceived by FEU, Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities and the Training Agency, as a response to the staff development needs of those mainstream teachers and trainers identified in *A 'Special' Professionalism* and in the Training Agency's *Special Needs Strategy* as having a major involvement with learners with special needs.

THE KEY PRINCIPLES

Learning Support takes its central principles from *A 'Special' Professionalism*. They are:

- People with special needs have a right to the same education and training opportunities as their peers.
- This means that provision must be adapted to meet their needs.
- Staff working in provision need support in helping them meet these learning needs.
- Every member of staff has a potential contribution to make to the learning of people with special needs.

8

INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION

The production of **Learning Support** has been an exercise in inter-agency collaboration and we would wish its dissemination and use to mirror that three-way partnership. No single providers can meet all the learning needs of a learner as she or he moves from school to college and then into training or as an adult learner into college and training programme. The kind of coherence and continuity that brings about successful transition can only be achieved by providers planning and training together. We hope that **Learning Support** will act as a catalyst for regional and local inter-agency activities that will promote a common understanding of the needs of learners with special needs. They are not significantly different from those of other learners, as this staff development pack so clearly illustrates.

G. P. Stanton J. F. Smith Deborah Cooper

Geoff Stanton
FEU

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Training Agency

Deborah Cooper
Skill

INTRODUCTION

THE PRODUCTION PROCESS

The **Learning Support** project had four phases:

Phase 1. A national trawl for existing staff development materials followed by an analysis of the many contributions made by practitioners and trainers from a range of organisational settings.

Phase 2. The writing of new materials and the adaptation of materials received in phase 1. Materials were tried and evaluated by experienced and inexperienced staff developers and trainers working in a variety of contexts.

Phase 3. The assembling of each element of the pack.
Consultation with the users' group.

Phase 4. Editing and production of the pack.

Learning Support has been strengthened in each phase by the involvement of mainstream and 'specialist' practitioners. This commitment was given whole-heartedly and the role of 'critical friend' that many took on in relation to the pack adds to its final credibility. The materials have been used and evaluated by a considerable number of teachers and trainers.

THE AUTHORS

Both authors are experienced practitioners, one working with learners with special needs, the other with teachers who are involved in the work. **Sally Faraday** was based at Streatham and Tooting Adult Education Institute in ILEA when she began work on the project and was already known for the quality of her work there. **Richard Harris**, Principal Lecturer at Bolton Institute of Higher Education, has been active in special needs work and in supporting the National Bureau of Students with Disabilities for some considerable time.

Both share a commitment to the integration of people with disabilities into mainstream education and training.

Their task has been to assimilate the materials and ideas offered by practitioners, to generate effective new materials and to give coherence and continuity to the whole enterprise. We are grateful to them both for their capacity to hold firm to a vision of a staff development pack that would express the real meaning of 'meeting individual needs'.

GUIDANCE AND ADVICE

The authors were supported by a management team of representatives from each of the three sponsoring agencies. Because the pack was to promote simple good practice in training and curriculum development, one of that team was a 'mainstream' staff developer. This group, in turn, was advised by a Steering Committee that included members from national voluntary organisations, DES, HMI, NFER and colleges and training centres.
Their valuable support is gratefully acknowledged.

THE OUTCOME

The strength of **Learning Support** is in its emphasis on meeting individual learning needs by moving through the familiar curriculum process of:

- needs analysis
- design
- implementation
- review
- evaluation

It accepts too, that professionals start at different points in their own learning. This curriculum process and the recognition and acceptance of difference lie at the heart of all good teaching and training. What we do for learners with special needs is no different, but no less.

The Management Team

CONTENTS OF THE PACK BY ELEMENTS

1. Introductory Element

Section 1. Setting the scene
Section 2. Awareness of special education/training needs
Section 3. Undertaking an analysis of needs
Section 4. Establishing a framework
Section 5. Applying the framework

Element 2. Curriculum/Training Programme Design and Evaluation Strategies

- Establishing aims and objectives
  What is involved?
  How do you do it?
- Exploring principles of design
  What they are
  What they mean
- Strategies for implementation
  What the alternatives are
  How to choose them
- Evaluation
  What it means
  How to develop a strategy

Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes

- Learner centredness
  What it means
- Identifying special education/training needs
- Developing individual learning programmes
  The steps involved
  The skills required

Element 4. Assessment and Review

- The nature of assessment
- Making pre-admission assessments
- Initial assessment
- Assessing progress
- Methods of assessment
- Final assessment

Element 5. Training/Teaching and Learning Strategies

- Active learning
  What it involves
- Managing learning
  Managing time, space and people (both as individuals and in groups)
- Exploring methods
  What they are
  How they can be used
- Selecting strategies
  How to choose what to use.

Element 6. Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials

- Identifying learning materials
- Selecting materials
  How to do it
- Adapting learning materials
  What to consider
- Designing learning materials
  The issues involved

Element 7. Technical Aids and Information Technology

- Using technical aids
  How to include them
- Using information technology
  What it is
- Assessing computer-assisted learning (CAL) packages
  How to do it

Element 8. Guidance and Support

- Identifying the processes involved
- Developing the skills required

Element 9. Sources of Help and Advice / References and Bibliography

- Identifying the need for support
  The processes involved
- Providing support
  What is available
  Where to go
  Who to ask
- References and bibliography

The Resources Section

- Case-studies: some trainees/students

USING THE PACK

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PACK?

There are increasing numbers of learners with special needs now involved in post-16 training and education programmes. All staff involved in these programmes are likely to meet such learners at some time. However, few staff have had much experience or, indeed, training to enable them to work with learners with special needs. This pack is a response to meeting the needs of these staff.

The aims of the pack are:

- to enhance existing knowledge, skills and confidence of staff working with young people with special training/educational needs;
- to develop in staff appropriate attitudes and awareness of the special needs of young people in post-16 training/education;
- to promote quality in training/education by indicating how staff and learners may, by adapting, assist the processes of integration and progression;
- to provide a flexible, process approach to staff training.

WHO IS IT FOR?

It is intended to be primarily for staff fulfilling the following roles:

TRAINING AGENCY SCHEMES	FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES
YTS trainers	mainstream tutors with a major commitment to special needs work
accredited training centres	special needs co-ordinators staff development officers

It will also be of value for:

Other settings
• Health authority staff with an education or training role • Adult and higher education tutors who may have students with special needs attending courses • Social services community day care and residential staff • Voluntary sector tutors and trainers

The needs of these staff may be defined as including some or all of the following:

- an awareness of special needs;
- confidence in working with people with special needs;
- the ability to analyse individual learning needs;
- the ability to develop strategies for planning, delivery and assessment;
- the ability to create and use appropriate resources and aids;
- the ability to utilise appropriate support services;
- guidance and counselling skills appropriate to meeting trainees'/students' individual needs.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SPECIAL NEEDS?

Individuals with special needs are legitimate learners. They have the same rights to training and education as their peers. What is special about them is that, unless they receive some kind of individually designed **support**, they are restricted in their capacity to benefit from the range of provision that is on offer.

There is an enormous variation in how people learn and this should be matched by a corresponding variety of training/educational options.

It is important to recognise that those with special needs, like all learners, are individuals. They do not constitute a homogeneous group. They will be at different levels of learning and will progress at different rates. Consequently, the kinds of additional support they will need will be diverse.

The principle of equal opportunities for all, underpins these statements.

> '. . . young people with special training needs (are) those who require significant extra or specialised training and support beyond that normally needed to gain access to and benefit from YTS.'
>
> *(YTS Special Training Needs: A Code of Practice)*

HOW IS THE PACK ORGANISED?

The pack consists of:

- **User's Guide** – mainly for facilitators
- **The Introductory Element** – for tutors/trainers and facilitators
- **Eight elements** of information and exercises – for tutors/trainers and facilitators
- **Resources section** – for use with the pack

The User's Guide explains the purpose of the pack; who it is for; the philosophy of the pack; the content and organisation of the pack and how to use it.

The Introductory Element is the opening to the pack. It provides the basis for understanding and exploring the subsequent elements and introduces the main issues considered in the pack which are:

– the context of training/teaching;
– awareness of needs;
– analysis of needs;
– providing a framework to meet special needs.

The eight elements of information, exercises and further resources provide detailed consideration of each theme. These are:

- Element 2. **Curriculum/Training Programme Design and Evaluation Strategies**
- Element 3. **Devising Individual Learning Programmes**
- Element 4. **Assessment and Review**
- Element 5. **Training/Teaching and Learning Strategies**
- Element 6. **Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials**
- Element 7. **Technical Aids and Information Technology**
- Element 8. **Guidance and Support**
- Element 9. **Sources of Help and Advice/References and Bibliography**

The References and Bibliography for the entire pack is to be found at the end of Element 9 and provides details of all publications cited and of others which may prove to be useful.

The Resources Section contains support materials to use with the pack consisting of a collection of twelve case-studies, which are based on real students and trainees. These may be used for reference throughout, alongside cases known to the participants.

Apart from the **Introductory Element**, which is the starting point for everything, it is not intended that the numbering of the elements should represent any ideal route through the pack. Indeed, it is important that groups negotiate their own priorities – see the following pages – and use the pack as their needs dictate. The signposting system indicates the linking points between the various elements and may help identify pathways through.

HOW TO USE THE PACK – GUIDELINES FOR FACILITATORS

WHAT IS THE PROCESS OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT?

The pack is designed to mirror the process of training and education that is to be used with the trainees/students themselves. The emphasis is on active learning, and learning through experience so the activities which form a major part of the pack provide opportunities:

- to practise and develop appropriate skills knowledge and attitudes;
- to reflect upon the working experience;
- to share and learn from collective experience.

Flexibility is the key in using the pack.

- It is designed to be used in a range of settings recognising the variety of people, priorities and time involved.
- No timings for the use of the pack or a particular element are specified.
- The pace is determined by the users.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR?

The main role of the facilitator is to enable the effective use of the materials in the pack. There are five aspects to this role:

- identification and analysis of staff needs;
- planning training sessions;
- implementing training sessions;
- evaluation of training sessions;
- support for people in training.

These aspects are now considered in greater detail.

IDENTIFICATION OF STAFF NEEDS

Individual strengths and experiences of staff vary. Therefore priorities for training will vary. There is a range of techniques for identifying the training needs of staff, which include:

- structured interview/self-profiling;
- peer counselling;
- group questionnaires;
- course team assessment.

Structured interview/ self-profiling This involves identifying individual needs through responses to carefully structured questions. An example is shown on the next page.

Peer counselling Two staff with similar responsibilities discuss their training needs with each other. By sharing perceptions, individual needs and priorites are identified and clarified.

Group questionnaires These may be distributed to groups of staff to indicate training needs. They need to be collated in order to identify priority areas. (An example is shown over the page.)

Course team assessment

Where teams exist they provide a useful forum for identifying their own training needs in relation to the training programme or curriculum with which they are involved. This will focus attention on the priorities in a very specific way.

Useful references to this topic are *Planning Staff Development* (FEU, 1987) and *Teaching Skills: Towards a Strategy of Staff Development and Support for Vocational Preparation* (Longman for FEU, 1982).

AN EXAMPLE OF A SELF-PROFILE OR GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Can I assess the learners' needs?
2. Can I plan for each individual trainee/student?
3. Can I provide relevant learning experiences?
4. Can I support learners with guidance?
5. Can I develop core skills in my area of teaching/training?
6. Can I plan suitable learning programmes for a group?
7. Can I translate programmes into competence objectives?
8. Can I use a variety of learning methods?
9. Can I design and adapt learning materials?
10. Can I assess learning?
11. Can I evaluate programmes?
12. Can I find help and support when necessary?
13. Can I integrate my work with that of other staff?

Each member of staff can identify strengths and weaknesses by responding to the range of chosen questions on the form below by putting a cross at the appropriate place on the scale for each question.

SELF-PROFILE FORM

	Skill/experience				
Question	Low				High
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					

A COMPLETED SELF-PROFILE FORM

Skill/experience

Question	Low				High
1.	✓				
2.			✓		
3.			✓		
4.		✓			
5.				✓	
6.				✓	
7.			✓		
8.			✓		
9.			✓		
10.					✓
11.					✓
12.		✓			
13.	✓				

ANALYSING THE NEEDS IDENTIFIED

In the completed example, the staff member has provided a self-generated picture of strengths and weaknesses. This highlights the areas where the individual staff development programme will need to concentrate. In this case, analysing needs and integrating with the work of others seem to be priorities.

By putting together these individual profiles it is possible to identify the strengths and weaknesses, and consequent priorities, of the group of staff with whom you are working. From this you can, collectively, draw up a programme of training.

You may find that priorities vary. In such circumstances, you will need to negotiate.

Negotiation involves everyone working in a defined context, communicating their attitudes and expectations, making concessions and having commitment to the agreed outcome. There are many ways of negotiating, including:

- one-to-one negotiation to agree an individual training plan;
- group discussion on the needs identified, with the task of arriving at a consensus of priorities;
- team decision-making on staff training priorities in relation to the training programme or course.

(You will find more on the processes of negotiation in Element 8, **Guidance and Support**.)

As far as this pack is concerned, once you have completed the **Introductory Element**, such negotiation will help you to identify where to go next. The rest of the pack is structured to enable you to choose your own starting point and routes through it.

The issues covered have been separated into elements so that they can be explored in detail. However, such is the interrelated nature of the issues that they cannot be treated wholly in isolation. The pack has a series of signposts to identify where issues are linked. These signposts indicate where related issues are covered in other elements.

SIGNPOSTING

Here are some examples of how the signposting can be used.

SIGNPOSTING: EXAMPLE 1

A group of staff identify a range of different individual priority areas. They agree through negotiation, that they will start with Element 4, **Assessment and Review**.

In this element they find that a link is signposted between initial assessment and Element 3, **Devising Individual Learning Programmes**.

On completing the study of **Assessment and Review**, they choose **Devising Individual Learning Programmes** as the next priority.

Devising Individual Learning Programmes signposts a link to Element 8, **Guidance and Support**, which they move on to next.

In this example the signposting helped to resolve the different priorities by suggesting a route to pursue.

SIGNPOSTING: EXAMPLE 2

A course team has been asked by the management to develop and implement a new TVEI (Technical and Vocational Education Initiative) framework.

They start with Element 2, **Curriculum/Training Programme Design and Evaluation Strategies**.

Having completed the design, they examine implementation through Element 5 **Training/Teaching and Learning Strategies**.

This leads them on to Element 6, **Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials**.

While following this main pathway, they follow some of the signposts to specific points in other elements such as Element 9, **Sources of Help and Advice** and Element 4, **Assessment and Review**.

PLANNING TRAINING SESSIONS

This can be seen as two stages: strategic and operational.

Strategic stage

Enlist the support of senior staff to ensure that staff are available for training, to give recognition of this staff development work and to make the necessary budgetary provision. These arrangements will vary from establishment to establishment.

Liaise with other facilitators to share experiences and co-operate in training where appropriate. Networks such as those provided by Accredited Centres, Skill (National Bureau for Students with Disabilities), Regional Groups and Regional Curriculum Bases can prove valuable in this regard; they can provide specialist support on training methods and content, where necessary.

Establish regular times of training. It is often useful to have a series of training sessions to provide a focus and a development programme. Time between sessions is useful to enable staff to reflect and practise developing skills with students/trainees.

Operational stage

Ensure that the practicalities have been taken care of, e.g. rooms booked, papers duplicated.

Decide on the role that you will play and on the general format of each session.

Try to ensure that participants have had an opportunity to read the relevant information sections of the pack. (The materials are designed to be copied.) This will save time during sessions and enable concentration on activities.

IMPLEMENTING TRAINING SESSIONS

Some points to consider when running sessions:

- Give direction to the session by stating its purpose and intended outcomes.
- After the first session allow time at the beginning of each subsequent session to review progress and all outstanding problems.
- Arrange the setting to suit the purpose of the session.
- Encourage all group members to participate (the activities will help this in many cases).
- Try to create a climate which offers opportunities for participants to air problems as well as to contribute ideas and practise skills.
- Use the different strengths of the participants. The needs analysis will help identify these. In some cases, participants may be encouraged to lead sessions themselves. This is valuable, because it serves their development and can overcome differences in priorities, by a 'knowledgeable' staff member showing his/her experience with other staff who lack that experience and therefore have identified that gap as a priority.
- Give positive recognition to appropriate and constructive ideas.
- Intervene only when necessary, to give directions or help clarify ideas. The information and activities in the pack are directed at participants, and guidelines on the use of activities is given at the beginning of each one. In some cases, for example when a brainstorm exercise is called for, you can serve as the recorder of ideas.
- Be flexible and modify plans for sessions depending on response. If interesting ideas emerge, not directly related to the theme, be prepared to pursue them. No timings are given for the activities in the pack. This is deliberate as it allows participants to work at their own pace.
- Allow time at the end of each session for a summary and review of what has been learned. Encourage participants to do this.
- Discuss the value of the session. This may give pointers to the future direction for work, perhaps following a particular signpost in the pack, or pointers on methods for the sessions.
- Throughout, encourage participants to take responsibility for their contributions rather than depending on you. This will enhance ownership of the ideas in the pack and promote their application.
- Ensure that participants have set their own plans for action by the end of each session. It is useful to set a date to review what has been achieved.

EVALUATION OF TRAINING SESSIONS

It is important to judge the effectiveness of both the content and processes used in the sessions.

Evaluation involves the ordering and presentation of information so that judgements may be made on:

- the extent to which objectives have been achieved;
- the effectiveness of the training received;
- the relevance of training to the needs identified.

This can lead to a review of the training programme, renewing the priorities and making appropriate modification to planning and implementation.

It is important to decide what is to be recorded and for what purpose, so that the appropriate data can be collected and suitable methods used. There is little value in collecting information for its own sake.

The collection of information should be both a continuous and summative process. It can be gathered in a variety of ways including informal feedback through discussion, detailed questionnaires and reports, and triangulation procedures.

The latter procedure involves feedback from the facilitator, the participants, and the 'third party' as observer.

For details on evaluation processes and procedure see Section 5, Evaluation and Review, of Element 2, **Curriculum/Training Programme Design and Evaluation Strategies**, and *Planning Staff Development* (FEU, 1988).

SUPPORTING STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Effective staff development requires adequate preparation, and support both during and after the process.

The support may take a number of forms, including:

- preparing a clear statement of outcomes;
- preparing adequate advance publicity;
- targeting staff, resources and information;
- ensuring adequate time for training (free of commitments);
- preparing opportunities for practice in different settings;
- mentorship – advising and sharing problems with an experienced/sympathetic colleague;
- action research – carrying out projects within the workplace;
- provision of funding, materials and facilities.

All the above will help staff during training to cope with, and benefit from, the experience.

The training should bring about change in both attitudes and performance. Support is needed here just as much, to help in sustaining the change and providing opportunities to utilise the new knowledge and skills developed.

A GUIDE TO THE LAYOUT AND SYMBOLS USED IN THE PACK

Exercises

The pack is designed to promote the active learning of staff. To this end each element has a series of exercises related to the information provided on the issues. Each of these exercises will be overlaid with a pink tint for easy identification.

The exercises vary to some extent depending on their content but the basic structure is as follows:

Advance preparation – self-explanatory.

Participation level – whether it is to be undertaken:

• individually	○
• in pairs	○ ○
• in small groups	○ ○ ○
• as a whole group	○ ○ ○ ○

The number of white circles incorporated in the heading of each exercise indicates which of these four participation levels applies.

Initial Statement of the purpose of the exercise and its general nature.

Methods – what the participants are requested to do. The participants are addressed directly.

Guidelines for facilitators – where the exercise requires substantial facilitator input, guidance has been provided.

Stimulus sheets – with some activities there are sheets to structure the process; with others there are suggested solutions to tasks to form a basis for discussion. There are no right and wrong answers.

The stimulus or task sheets will be included as white boxes within the tinted areas of the relevant exercises. They can be used as they are or facilitators can make their own, based on the information given.

Signposts – appear on the left of the main text and indicate points where links can be found to material in other elements. See page 13 above for examples.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are to be found with varying frequency throughout the pack.

ALBSU	Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit
ATC	Accredited Training Centre
BTEC	Business and Technician Education Council
CAL	Computer Assisted Learning
CET	Council for Educational Technology
CPVE	Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education
CMH	Campaign for People with Mental Handicaps
CSV	Community Service Volunteers
DES	Department of Education and Science
FE	Further Education
FEU	Further Education Unit
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HEC	Health Education Council
IT	Information Technology
MSC	Manpower Services Commission (see TC)
NBHS	National Bureau for Handicapped Students
NCVQ	National Council for Vocational Qualifications
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
NYB	National Youth Bureau
RSA	Royal Society of Arts
RVQ	Review of Vocational Qualifications
SCET	Scottish Council for Educational Technology
Skill	National Bureau for Students with Disabilities (formerly NBHS)
TA	Training Agency (formerly TC and MSC)
TC	Training Commission (formerly MSC)
TVEI	Technical and Vocational Education Initiative
WISC	Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children
YTS	Youth Training Scheme

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and the many accredited centres, training centres and colleges who supported the project.

LEARNING SUPPORT

INTRODUCTORY ELEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The **Introductory Element** is intended to:

- develop your understanding and experience of what is involved in working with people who have special needs;
- help you to identify the attitudes and approaches needed in such work;
- introduce you to the needs of the learners concerned;
- identify the overall approach to the planning and delivery of programmes;
- provide an overview of the range of issues examined in the pack.

The **Introductory Element** consists of five sections:

Section 1. Setting the scene

- explores the relationship between teacher, student and curriculum, or trainer, trainee and training programme

Section 2. Awareness of special education/training needs

- explores attitudes to, and understanding of, learners with special needs

Section 3. Undertaking an analysis of needs

- gives an introduction to the practical issues involved

Section 4. Establishing a framework

- looks at the main features involved in building a programme

Section 5. Applying the framework

- helps in applying the framework in practice

SECTION I. SETTING THE SCENE

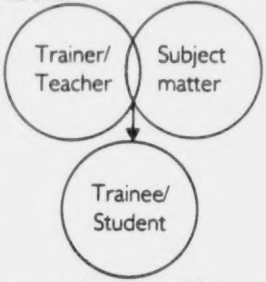
This section introduces some of the basic features that you need to be aware of when working with learners with special needs. The focus is on the nature of learning and on how the teacher, the learner, and the context in which they operate, are interrelated.

People with special needs are to be found at all levels of the education and training process, from part-time college or training courses to full-time degree courses. The needs, of course, will be very different, but it is our belief that the training package will contain something of relevance to all; however, the primary focus is on trainees and students with some degree of learning difficulty.

The relationship between teacher, student and curriculum or trainer, trainee and training programme, is complex.

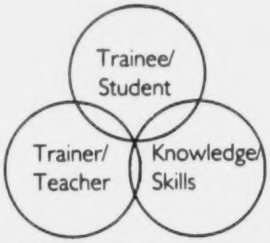
One approach used frequently in education and training stresses the relationship between the teacher/trainer and the subject matter. The subject matter is transmitted to the student/trainee.

This approach looks something like this:



This approach, while it has some merit, has proved less successful in catering for the needs of new client groups and new curriculum frameworks and training programmes. The impact of integrated programmes and vocational training with the emphasis on competence through the development of knowledge, understanding, skills, appropriate attitudes and experience, has led to another approach.

It looks something like this:



Here the three features overlap and interlock. Initial planning focuses on the current abilities and identified needs of the learner. These inform the development of progammes, which then incorporate appropriate knowledge and skills. The role of the trainer/teacher is to enable needs to be met by providing the required structure and approaches to learning.

Thus, the teacher/trainer should:

- know about the subject matter or content of the programme;
- understand the needs of learners;
- know something about the learning patterns of the students/trainees;
- be able to provide approaches and techniques which enable learning to take place.

Remember, we are dealing with individuals, each with their own particular ways of learning. This list below is intended only to illustrate some general features of learning, particularly in relation to those who have learning difficulties.

- Consider the pace of learning and add more steps if necessary. This may appear obvious but needs to be re-emphasised.
- Find ways of presenting material and ideas so that you do not rely only on verbal explanations.
- Concrete experience may be necessary to promote learning.
- Structure and direction are necessary for spontaneous learning to occur.
- There may be a need to practise skills and competences in a range of different situations to enable generalisation and transfer of learning.
- Interest is usually concentrated on situations which are immediate and relevant to the learner's own experience. This indicates a need for direct experience to maintain motivation.
- There is a strong need for success to be immediate and recognised.
- Self-direction and independent working are helped by a familiar structure within which students/trainees can gain self confidence.
- Students/trainees may need extra support to develop a number of skills including communication, physical co-ordination, etc.
- Students/trainees may have personal action plans or individual programme plans which nonetheless emphasise the ability to work within groups and to develop social interaction skills. Individual programme plans are not meant to be developed in isolation from group activities.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN FEATURES OF THIS APPROACH?

- The content and aims of programmes are drawn from the needs of young people themselves, rather than a predetermined syllabus. The work is becoming 'student-/trainee-centred'. It starts from what the learner *can do* and builds on individual achievement.
- The traditional model of teaching/training, implying the one-way flow of information from teacher/trainer to student/trainee, is less relevant. Students'/trainees' previous knowledge, experience and interests are used instead to identify starting points. The training programme/curriculum should provide opportunities for learning skills relevant to the learners' adult lives.
- Education and training are complementary. Education includes training, and training is a part of education, so the educational process is often made accesssible through training activities. Objectives are set in terms of understanding, competence, attitudes and judgement, and skills are not developed in isolation. For example, in working with wood, the learners are simultaneously developing hand/eye co-ordination, numeracy skills, aesthetic awareness and judgements about quality. The nature of learning and education is to develop a whole range of skills and knowledge in an integrated way so knowledge, skills and experience gained in one area are used to build on or consolidate that used in another.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THESE FEATURES FOR STUDENTS/TRAINEES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS?

a) Coming to terms with the responsibilty placed on them for their own learning.

Many have had previous experience of being either protected or ignored. In some instances, they may have been understandably protected by parents or in their earlier education. The tradition of special education has been to focus on the lacks or deficits in basic skills and attempt some remedial work, often in a separate setting. The effects of segregation have been well documented. They can lead to an underestimation of abilities, consequent under-achievement and a failure to develop self-confidence and self-esteem. Equally, the trainee/student with special needs may have struggled in a mainstream school, or been ignored, with much the same result.

Others may have shown challenging behaviour which has led to conflict in previous settings. This may have resulted in a fragmented educational experience and under-achievement. They may have come to view those in authority with suspicion, and themselves as lacking in worth.

b) Developing the skills to recognise and express their needs.

Like many others, students/trainees with special needs may lack the confidence and ability to identify what they want or require. They need to develop self-advocacy skills in order to learn how to present ideas and explore interests.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THESE FEATURES FOR STAFF WORKING WITH STUDENTS/TRAINEES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS?

a) Examining their own approaches and attitudes towards students/trainees.

Emphasis is laid on *working with* students/trainees. This demands developing an understanding of their needs and attitudes. It also involves establishing positive approaches towards them rather than looking on them as in some way deficient or inadequate. Learners with special needs are legitimate learners. [Further exploration of attitudes is to be found in Section 2 of this **Introductory Element**.]

b) Understanding and being able to analyse needs and use appropriate strategies to support students/trainees with special needs.

This involves exploring current practice and identifying ways in which planning, delivery and assessment need to be modified or new approaches sought. It is largely a case of enhancing existing skills and practice rather than doing anything radically different.

c) Providing a framework within which subject matter can be structured to provide students/trainees with opportunities to develop appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes.

2. AWARENESS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION/ TRAINING NEEDS

This section questions the kind of assumptions we make. It is designed to help in recognising how individuals and institutional structures impose handicaps on those trainees/students with special education/training needs. It should challenge you to recognise and consequently avoid the pitfalls of stereotyping. It should also enable you to take positive action to ensure that these students/trainees have the same rights of access to resources and quality of provision as anyone else.

Positive attitudes towards trainees/students with special needs enable positive approaches to teaching/training.

We have already commented on the importance of recognising the individual needs of each student/trainee. This is essential if we are to begin to meet special education/training needs. Planning should be based on the needs of individuals, and a learner-centred approach and individual learning programmes should be developed.

SIGNPOST

Element 3, Devising Individual Learning Programmes, considers this issue.

SIGNPOST

Element 5, Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies, deals with trainee-/student-centred approaches.

When we start to talk about special education/training needs, it is easy to jump to conclusions about the sort of people we are referring to. Yet we must guard against making assumptions about the perceived needs of groups of people just because they bear the same administrative label. Their characteristics and needs will be as varied and as individual as for any group of students/trainees. The only thing students/trainees with special education/ training needs have in common is their need for 'something extra' to enable them to learn and to participate fully in a course or training programme. This could include:

- individual guidance sessions;
- adapted learning materials;
- extra time to complete tasks;
- extra support to develop social relationships.

Guidelines for facilitators

PLEASE READ THE ADVICE BELOW BEFORE USING THIS SECTION.

When delivering this section of the pack, you are strongly advised to work with a staff trainer who has experience of disability awareness and equality training. The activities can be challenging for some staff so skilled facilitation is recommended to ensure positive outcomes. There are experienced trainers with disabilities or other special needs, who are available to help you with this.

The following materials have all been tested in the format given, in a variety of settings.

It is not necessary to work systematically through all the activities. You can select, reorder and substitute your own activities, depending on your circumstances.

STEREOTYPES

EXERCISE 1

Activity for two groups

Most people do not realise how their attitudes to people with special education/training needs are influenced by stereotyped images. This exercise should illustrate some common stereotypes. It should enable the participants to examine their own attitudes so they will be aware of the problems they may create in the workplace.

Form two groups to explore each of the subjects below.

Give each group a different subject.

The subjects are:

1. Trainee or student
2. Trainee with special training needs or student with special education needs

Ask each group to brainstorm the subject by calling out the first thoughts, words and images which come to mind.

Here are some typical examples for each subject:

1. Trainee or student: classes, learning, work, problems, exams
2. Trainee with special training needs or student with special education needs: time, wheelchair, slow, difficult, patience, aggressive

One person from each group should list the suggestions until the group runs out of ideas.

It is important to organise the two groups so they cannot hear or be influenced by each other.

Bring the two groups together and, through discussion, identify and underline all the negative statements on the list.

Draw attention, if the groups have not done so themselves, to the differences and, particularly, any major omissions on the special education/training needs list.

Items which are often omitted from the special needs list are such positive points as qualifications, employment, progression, etc.

Discuss the implications of these omissions in terms of:

- education/training opportunities;
- employment opportunities;
- social opportunities.

● ● ● EXERCISE 2

Small group activity

Give each participant either an X, Y or Z task sheet.

Ask participants to form small groups determined by the letter on their task sheet (i.e. all the Xs together).

Ask the groups to discuss the questions and to prepare to give feedback. Ask each group (X,Y and Z) to report back their conclusions to the whole group.

Record the conclusions from each group on flipcharts.

Discuss any differences that have emerged, drawing attention to expectations for factors such as:

- employment
- home
- relationships
- status in society

Conclude the exercise with a brief comment from each participant on the range of stereotypes elicited.

TASK SHEET X

X is just 16 years old. He has just passed GCSEs in English, Maths, Geography, Biology and French.

He is interested in photography and reads a lot.

He lives in the Midlands and has one sibling.

What do you imagine X's life will be like in ten years time?

TASK SHEET Y

Y is just 16 years old. She has just passed GCSEs in English, Maths, Geography, Biology and French.

She is interested in photography and reads a lot.

She lives in the Midlands and has one sibling.

What do you imagine Y's life will be like in ten years time?

TASK SHEET Z

Z is just 16 years old and has just passed GCSEs in English, Maths, Geography, Biology and French.

Z's interests are photography and reading.

Z lives in the Midlands and has one sibling.

Z is a wheelchair user and has some speech impairment.

What do you imagine Z's life will be like in ten years time?

ATTITUDES

● ● ● ● EXERCISE 3

This exercise employs a questionnaire which is intended to encourage you to look at some common assumptions and to raise relevant issues.

It may be used in various ways:

- individually, to check on changing attitudes and views
- as a stimulus to group discussion
- as a checklist to review and consolidate experience

QUESTIONNAIRE

Circle **T** (true) or **F** (false).

1. A visually impaired trainee/student in a business/office skills programme would need to have all materials in braille. **T F**
2. A disabled trainee/student is usually most suited to a general/basic level programme. **T F**
3. An older person enrolled to retrain for health or caring occupations might be the least self-assured learner on the programme. **T F**
4. Those with limited communication skills learn best in the same way. **T F**
5. A trainee/student with severe learning difficulties should not enrol for a car mechanic/repair programme because she/he could not understand the various concepts involved in internal combustion engines. **T F**
6. Naturally, someone with a physical disability will have high motivation to succeed in the programme. **T F**
7. Trainees/students with severe learning difficulties often have behaviour problems which require specialist counselling and treatment. **T F**
8. Posters in your workshop/teaching room should never portray people with special educational/training needs in menial positions. **T F**
9. 'Able' learners will progress faster than those with special needs. **T F**
10. People with learning difficulties need constant close supervision because they cannot learn responsibility. **T F**
11. It is unlikely that a trainee/student in a wheel-chair would have the same personal problems as other learners. **T F**
12. It is your responsibility to know the symptoms of an epileptic attack if you have someone with epilepsy in your programme. **T F**
13. The programme a person with a physical disability enters is up to the specialist staff. **T F**
14. Women with learning difficulties should have to do the same heavy lifting in practical mechanical classes as other learners. **T F**
15. The progress made by people with special needs reflects the quality of your teaching/training. **T F**
16. People with special needs might need help to understand the need for career planning skills. **T F**
17. Older learners on retraining programmes are more likely to respect your role as a teacher/trainer. **T F**
18. Minimum performance standards should not be lowered to allow trainees/students with learning difficulties to succeed in trade and industrial programmes. **T F**

19. A learner with physical impairment which limits his/her endurance, would be prevented from using machines that require prolonged standing. **T** **F**

20. As a teacher/trainer you should contribute to decisions about the acceptance of learners with special needs, on to your programme. **T** **F**

21. It doesn't matter how you relate to your trainees/students with special needs personally, as long as you teach them the knowledge and skills they need. **T** **F**

22. You cannot meet the real learning needs of those with special educational needs unless you provide individual learning programmes within your classroom/workshop. **T** **F**

23. Visually impaired or blind students should not be allowed into workshops unless they can read the safety signs. **T** **F**

24. It is unsafe for people who cannot read to work with machinery until safety measures have been explained to them. **T** **F**

25. Trainees/students who use computers as communication aids will probably catch up quickly with other learners in information technology programmes. **T** **F**

26. Lack of discipline is a basic problem for people with special educational/training needs. **T** **F**

27. There are things that you can do to help those with special needs who have low self-esteem. **T** **F**

28. People who have been deaf since birth may have difficulty understanding the language you use on worksheets. **T** **F**

29. Trainees/students with special needs should be required to work independently. **T** **F**

30. You can help someone who lipreads by exaggerating your lip movements. **T** **F**

31. You will need to give those with special education/training needs more attention than others. **T** **F**

32. It is helpful to visually impaired people if you keep equipment and furniture in the same place. **T** **F**

33. Some people with special needs prefer to be known as disabled rather than handicapped. **T** **F**

34. What is 'special' about special needs is the extra support and help required. **T** **F**

35. It is important to prepare your other trainees/students before a disabled member joins the course/training programme. **T** **F**

36. It is unfair to use different assessment methods for people with special needs. **T** **F**

37. You will find it easier to meet special needs if you know something about the causes of individual disabilities. **T** **F**

QUESTIONNAIRE CHECK-LIST

Compare your answers with the discussions of the statements given below.

1. False. Some visually impaired people can read materials using magnifiers. If the trainee/student cannot see at all, materials other than braille could be used, e.g. audio tapes.
2. False. Some may, given the extra support they need, be able to cope with programmes at any level. There is no reason why the trainee/student should not have a particular aptitude or talent for the course/training programme.
3. True. Adults returning to education/training often feel insecure because they have been away from formal training for a long time.
4. False. There is nothing about people with communication difficulties to suggest they all learn best in the same way. You need to consider each individual learning style and provide individualised programmes to accommodate that style.
5. False. She/he may be able to learn to perform the required skills although she/he does not necessarily understand the theory. The long-term goal for this trainee/student might be to become a helper rather than a skilled mechanic.
6. False. A learner with a physical disability could just as easily have low motivation. 'Naturally' implies a stereotype which may or may not hold good for any individual.
7. False. This remark is the worst kind of stereotype; some people with learning difficulties have behaviour problems, some don't. Even where someone does have behaviour problems, it is the teacher/trainer's responsibility to serve in an advisory/guidance role. It is equally important to know when to turn to specialist advice.
8. False. Posters may portray people with special needs in menial positions as long as they are balanced by posters portraying prestigious, high-income positions as well. Other people – able/disabled, black/white, male/female – should be represented in high- and low-status positions too.
9. False. This is not necessarily the case. Some people with special needs, given appropriate support will be able to progress just as fast (or as slowly) as any other. Others will learn more slowly.
10. People with learning difficulties can often learn responsibility if they are given the opportunity. To assume otherwise without having tried is to avoid your responsibility to teach both the content and the learners.
11. False. Paraplegic learners in wheelchairs are ordinary people just like anyone else. They may have exactly the same personal problems.
12. True. You should ensure that you can recognise an epileptic attack. You should know how to deal with a major attack and when to summon extra help.
13. False. The programme anyone enters should be governed by that individual's interests and goals. You have a responsibility to provide an input into the placement decision because you are most likely to be familiar with the requirements of the area.
14. True. All students – male/female, able/disabled – need the opportunity to develop the physical strength necessary to do the heavy lifting required by this type of occupation. It would not be helpful for some to help others out with heavy lifting.
15. True. Those with special needs are especially dependent on high-quality teaching/training. It is part of your responsibility to ensure, by constant monitoring, that adequate progress is made.
16. True. While trainees/students with special needs might be aware of the benefits of career planning, they might not be. These people may never have seen someone with the same difficulties as themselves get ahead, nor even realise it is possible.
17. True. Adults are more likely to respect your role. They probably went to school at a time when teacher/learner relationships were far more formal than now. Anyone who has been out of education/training for a long while may need help in adjusting to informal teaching/training methods.
18. False. The level of skill a trainee/student needs in performing any task is determined by performance criteria. Some may need extra time or help in achieving those minimum standards.

19. False. The answer is to adapt the machine and arrange for it to be lowered or a high stool provided. The answer is not to exclude the individual.
20. True. You should be one of the people contributing to that decision (See 13.).
21. False. How you relate to people with special needs, matters a great deal. It is essential to consider each trainee/student as an individual and as a whole person.
22. True. You can help all learners by providing flexible individualised programmes.
23. False. If someone cannot read the safety signs, you should make sure he or she knows about safety by using the best means for the individual. This could include braille signs, audiotaped instructions or telling each person individually.
24. True. As with 23, you must find the best way of doing this for each individual.
25. False. Just because someone is used to using computers for one function, does not mean she or he will be any better or any worse than any other trainee/student. The assumption that they will have to 'catch up' is based on a false stereotype.
26. False. Some people with special needs may have discipline problems but discipline is not the basic problem. Ensuring that work is relevant and challenging, through flexible individual programmes, is the best way of avoiding such difficulties.
27. True. There is much you can do, in an advisory or guidance role, to help anyone with low self esteem. Providing for success and giving positive reinforcement of success is a valuable strategy.
28. True. Prelingually deaf students may not have had the opportunity to develop the language structures we take for granted. You may need to provide simplified or illustrated worksheets to help. On the other hand, some people who have been deaf since birth have excellent communication skills.
29. False. No one should be *required* to work alone, but any trainee/student should be *allowed* to work individually if that is the way she/he learns best. Some trainees/students with special needs may need extra practice in working co-operatively, in groups.
30. False. This will not help at all, indeed it is likely to make it harder for the lipreader. Speak clearly and slightly slower, making sure you are in a good light and do not cover your mouth while speaking. This will be helpful.
31. False. You should ensure that all trainees/students have your attention when necessary. Someone with special needs may have to wait his or her turn like everyone else. You will need to ensure that you can give everyone *individual* attention.
32. True. If a trainee/student has very poor vision he/she will need to memorise where things are. If you must make changes make sure you explain them to her/him.
33. True. However, disability and handicap mean different things. Most people would prefer to be thought of as individuals, first and foremost. As disability is handicapping only when it prevents a person from doing something.
34. True. The definition of a special education/training need is that it requires something over and above that normally provided for trainees/students. The support mechanism is central in providing that extra 'something'.
35. False. How would you feel if someone gave a short description of your shortcomings before you joined a course or training programme? Some people may wish to tell their fellow trainees/students something about themselves to facilitate communication. You should always take your cue from the person him/herself.
36. False. Any method of assessment is acceptable as long as it measures the same performance criteria as the standard assessment procedure. You may need to make special examination arrangements for some people.
37. False. The cause of a condition tells you nothing about how someone learns or the best way of helping him/her to learn.

3. UNDERTAKING AN ANALYSIS OF NEEDS

How do you analyse the needs of the trainee/student?

1. Where does the information come from?

Background information can be obtained from a number of sources such as:

- reports
- statements
- interviews

Information obtained from these sources may or may not be:

- accurate
- objective
- available to you

An important source is the trainee/student her/himself. By observing the performance or activity of the trainee/student you can identify current abilities and achievements. To facilitate this you can set up activities to enable you to observe the trainee/student at work.

SIGNPOST
Element 4, **Assessment and Review**, deals with sources of information.]

2. How do you use this information to plan?

The information you have obtained through observation gives you starting points for planning. You should derive your objectives from the trainees'/students' current levels of performance. The objectives should provide the experience to develop knowledge, skills and appropriate attitudes.

Throughout the course/training programme you should observe the performance of the trainee/student to monitor progress and improved performance. This in turn enables you to develop new objectives. Figure 1 illustrates the process.

SIGNPOST
Element 3, **Devising individual learning programmes**, examines this process.]

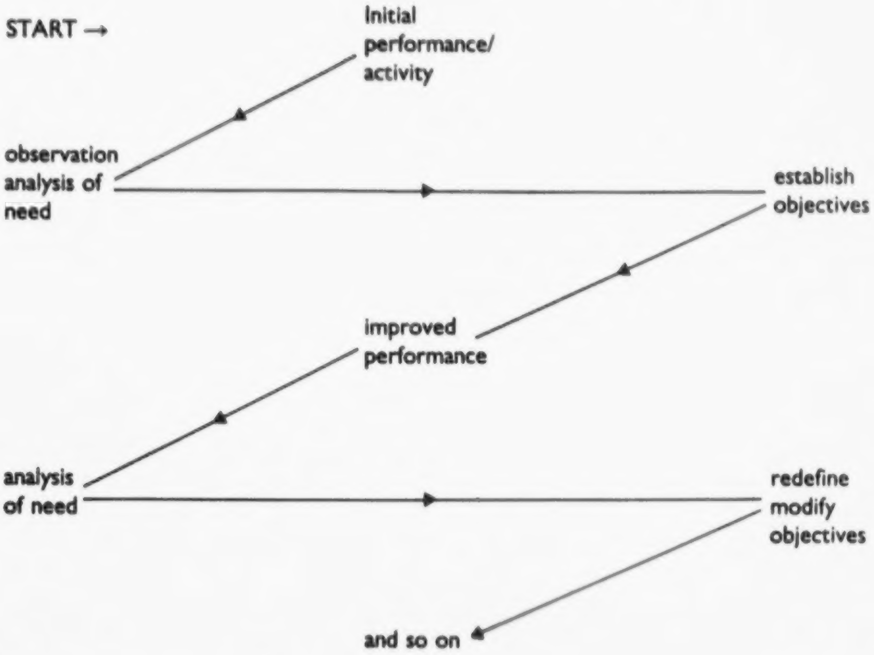

START →
Initial performance/ activity
observation analysis of need
establish objectives
improved performance
analysis of need
redefine modify objectives
and so on

Figure 1. Analysing needs from observation of performance

LANGUAGE

● EXERCISE 4A. DEFINITIONS

Individual work

The language we use reflects our attitudes. The next two exercises enable you to examine the words you use.

Give the participants Task Sheet A.

Ask them to complete it individually.

Collect several examples of completed sheets.

Discuss the definitions provided by the group members.

Draw attention to any implicit assumptions and value judgements which have been made.

A list of comments which were made during the testing of these materials is provided.

Guidelines for facilitators

While the next activity is in progress, you may wish to write on a spare sheet of paper a few examples of the words written by the participants. This may be photocopied and distributed for a final whole-group discussion of the issue.

TASK SHEET A

Write down the *first thing* that comes into your mind as you read the following words:

- behaviour problem
- exceptional
- deaf
- trainee/student with special needs
- disruptive
- mental handicap
- mongol
- problem
- bright
- dyslexic
- difficult behaviour
- able
- intelligent
- maladjusted
- slow
- gifted
- disadvantaged
- epileptic
- learning difficulty
- crippled
- partially sighted
- person with a disability
- special needs trainee/student

CHECK-LIST

This is a selection of comments which have been made.

- behaviour problem:

  difficult;
  disaffected;
  aggressive

- exceptional:

  bright;
  outstanding;
  rude

- disruptive:

  nuisance;
  boring;
  throwing furniture

- mental handicap:

  thick;
  horrible word;
  Tony

- deaf:
  hearing aid;
  sign language;
  funny speech;
  tinnitus
- trainee/student with special needs:
  dribbling;
  inadequate;
  fat
- bright:
  clever;
  sparkling;
  lively;
  humorous
- dyslexic:
  panic;
  spelling;
  not obvious;
- difficult behaviour:
  arrogant;
  patience;
  time
- able:
  capable;
  needing little help;
  precocious
- intelligent:
  responsive;
  lucky;
  alert;
  good worker
- maladjusted:
  violent;
  disruptive;
  hopeless;
  unfortunate
- disabled:
  limited;
  wheelchair;
  orange disc
- slow:
  patience;
  steady;
  frustrated;
  retarded
- mongol:
  short and squat;
  smiling;
  affectionate;
  Downs syndrome
- problem:
  trouble;
  bad language;
  challenge
- gifted:
  successful;
  brilliant;
  genius;
  quick
- disadvantaged:
  unfortunate;
  broken home;
  unlucky;
  sad
- epileptic:
  fit;
  fear;
  medication;
  danger
- learning difficulty:
  frustrating;
  slow;
  time;
  patience
- crippled:
  spastic;
  ugly word;
  victim;
  limited
- partially sighted:
  thick glasses;
  white stick;
  different
- person with a disability:
  apprehensive;
  needs help;
  anybody
- special needs trainee/student:
  give help;
  separate;
  slow

● ● ● EXERCISE 4B. DEFINITIONS

Small group activity

Give each participant Task Sheet, Definitions.

Ask the participants to form small groups to discuss the terms.

Each group should produce a written definition of the terms on the sheet.

Ask each small group to report back on the discussion plus the definitions to the whole group.

An information sheet giving various definitions is provided to assist the facilitator.

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Discuss the differences in definitions.

Compare with the definitions provided.

Analyse any variations.

TASK SHEET B

Write down your definition of the following terms:

- Handicap
- Disability
- Impairment
- Special educational need/special training need

CHECK-LIST

The following definitions of 'handicap', 'impairment' and 'disability' have been provided by the World Health Organisation (1980) and the Fish Report (*Equal Opportunities for All?* ILEA, 1985).

Handicap: Disabilities and difficulties become more or less handicapping depending on the expectations of others and on social contexts. Handicaps thus arise from the mismatch between the intellectual, physical, emotional and social behaviour and aspirations of the individual and the expectations, appropriate or otherwise, of the community and society at large. Individuals with disabilities or significant difficulties may be handicapped by their own attitude to them and by the attitudes of others. Of equal significance, the degree to which the individual is handicapped is determined by the educational, social, physical and emotional situations which he or she encounters. Handicapping effects may vary from situation to situation and vary over time. (Fish, 1985)

Disability: Any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being. (WHO, 1980)

Impairment: Any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function. (WHO, 1980)

These definitions draw the distinction between the inability to do certain things, as a result of disability or impairment and the handicap which results from the conditions which exist in the environment. For example:

- a person using a wheelchair is handicapped when confronted by a flight of steps, but not in an accessible building;
- a person with a hearing impairment is handicapped by a trainer/teacher who mumbles, or in a noisy room, but may not be at all handicapped in a quiet classroom with people who speak clearly.

Special educational needs/Special training needs: The 1981 Education Act, referring to school provision, defined special educational needs as those which require special provision to be made for them. The term learning difficulty was introduced to describe those who have *significantly greater* difficulty in learning than the majority of others the same age. This notion of 'significantly greater difficulty' has been used to describe the range of special needs. These terms are also used in post-school provision.

The 1988 *YTS Special Training Needs Code of Practice*, refers to those who require 'significant extra or specialised training and support beyond that normally needed to gain access to and benefit from YTS'.

● EXERCISE 5A

Individual work

This activity is designed to enable you to consider the ways in which you describe your trainees/students with special needs.

Give each participant a copy of Task Sheet and ask them to complete it individually.

Allow sufficient time to do so.

TASK SHEET C

This activity is designed to enable you to consider the ways in which you describe your trainees/students with special needs.

Think of a trainee/student with special needs with whom you have been working.

Imagine you have been asked to describe her/him to a colleague.

Write down between five and ten statements which you would use.

● ● EXERCISE 5B

Work in pairs

Ask the participants to read their comments to their partners.

Give Task Sheet D to each pair and ask them to complete it.

When this has been completed, discuss the outcomes with the whole group.

You may wish to provide a follow-up activity, asking the participants to go through the same process with some reports they have written or received.

TASK SHEET D

Work in pairs

Read your statements to your partner.

Discuss and underline those statements which say something positive about the trainee/student.

Rewrite all the other statements in positive terms, saying what the trainee/student *can* rather than cannot do.

Here are some examples:

- has poor literacy skills
- can read familiar words and short phrases, can write own name and address

- cannot concentrate
- can concentrate for up to five minutes, without prompting, on practical activities

- is poorly motivated
- is interested in xxxxxx and xxxxxx.

● EXERCISE 6

Individual activity

It is easier to understand the experience of your students/trainees by linking it with your own. This exercise is to enable you to explore the experience of not feeling 'able'.

Give each participant Task Sheet E, **Personal experience** 'Sometimes in my life . . .' to work on individually.

TASK SHEET E 'SOMETIMES IN MY LIFE . . .'

It is easier to understand the experience of your trainees/students, by linking it with your own. This exercise is to enable you to explore the experience of not feeling 'able'.

There may have been times when you were trying to learn something but felt less than 'able'.

For example:

- when you were ill
- you were temporarily 'disabled' through accident or illness
- you joined a new school/college/class/course
- you were learning something new

There may be plenty of others.

Identify the times when you did not feel 'able'.

- What were they?
- How did you feel?
- What do you think others thought of you?

● ●

Work in pairs

Ask the group to divide into pairs, and to discuss the contents with their partners.

The whole group may discuss the most pertinent features of the experiences they have described.

EXERCISE 7. INSTITUTION POLICY

Small group activity

Many education and training establishments now have a policy relating to the concerns of students with special education/training needs, as a part of their equal opportunities guidelines. Where a policy exists, the extent to which it is implemented and staff are familiar with it, varies.

The aim of this exercise is to focus on your working environment and to assess the extent to which it facilitates or handicaps full participation by trainees/students with special needs.

Small groups of three or four should discuss the questions on Task Sheet F, My Workplace, and prepare to report back the outcomes, at which point the information should be recorded.

It is helpful if you obtain copies of your institution's policy and give them to participants at the end of the session. Other useful publications which you may wish to distribute are:

- *YTS Special Training Needs: A Code of Practice*, MSC, 1988
- *Developing Effective Policy Statements*, NBHS, 1987
- *A College Guide: Meeting Special Educational Needs*, FEU, 1986

TASK SHEET F 'MY WORKPLACE'

Many education and training establishments now have a policy relating to the concerns of students with special education/ training needs. The extent to which these policies are implemented and staff are familiar with them, varies.

The aim of this exercise is to focus on your working environment and to assess the extent to which it facilitates or handicaps full participation by trainees/students with special needs.

Form into small groups of three or four.

Discuss the questions below and prepare to report back the outcomes of the discussions. Keep your own record for a later activity.

1. Does your own establishment have a specific policy relating to provision for trainees/ students with special education/training needs?
2. Do you know the key points of the policy? List them.
3. If you are not sure of the answers to 1 and 2, where could you find out?
4. Who, within your workplace, has a particular named responsibility for implementing policy with reference to trainees/students with special needs?
5. Is there a 'special needs co-ordinator' or equivalent in your workplace? If so, who is it and how can she/he be contacted?
6. What procedures or aspects of your workplace are likely to *facilitate* full participation by trainees/students with special needs? (You may wish to consider access, enrolment and admissions procedures, teaching methods, etc.)
7. Which factors within your workplace may be likely to *inhibit* full participation by trainees/students with special needs?
8. What plans exist for implementing your policy?
9. How does the policy relate to other aspects of equal opportunities policies at your establishment?

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

EXERCISE 8. PRESENTATION OF MATERIALS TO STIMULATE DISCUSSION

This activity is to help you to focus on the special needs of specific groups of individuals.

It will enable you to start to think about strategies for meeting needs in your establishment.

A list of stimulus resources follows below. You should select either material of your own, or from the list attached, which should focus on issues which are particularly relevant to your context. For example, you wish to focus on the development of self-advocacy skills so you may choose an extract from ' We can change the future'.

Give a short introduction, then present the stimulus materials.

NB. Short, well-chosen extracts from a film/video/audio presentation are often more effective as triggers for discussion than a 'whole' showing.

● ● ●

Small group activity

Ask the participants to form into small groups of three or four.

Ask the small groups to identify the main issues raised by the material, with a particular emphasis on special needs. Add any specific questions relevant to your context.

The small groups should identify and note the changes that would need to take place within an institution in order to meet the special needs identified.

Ask the small groups to report back briefly.

STIMULUS SHEET. VIDEOS AND FILMS

Advocacy Alliance *It's My Life Anyway* Originally a BBC2 *Open Space* programme

BBC *Joey* (the story of Joey Deacon, who wrote *Tongue Tied*), BBC Enterprises

BBC for NBHS *We Can Change the Future*, 1986

Concord Films Council *1975 People First Convention*, 1975

MENCAP London Division Participation Forum, VHS videos:

- *Speaking for Ourselves*, 1982
- *Have We a Future?* City Lit., 1983
- *A Choice in Our Lives – Doing the Lambeth Talk!* Lambeth Social Services, 1985
- *Let's Work Together*, (with CCETSW), 1987
- Open University *Finding a Voice* BBC, 1986

SOURCES OF VIDEOS AND FILMS ABOUT PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES:

BBC Enterprises, Woodston House, Oundle Road, Peterborough PR2 9PZ *or* Room 503, Villiers House, The Broadway, London W5 2PA.

Concord Films Council, 201 Felixstowe Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 9BJ.

Mental Health Film Council, 22 Harley Street, London W1N 2ED.

PERSONAL ACTION PLANS

You may be thinking about the enormous changes in policy and attitudes necessary to meet special education/training needs efficiently. It is important to realise that *you can* do something about it.

EXERCISE 9

Individual activity

The purpose of this exercise is to enable you to identify a task or series of tasks which you can implement. The outcome should be to increase the participation in your establishment of trainees/students with special needs.

1. Choose a specific area of particular relevance to you in your work on which to focus. Possible areas include:
   - recruitment
   - admissions
   - attitudes
   - programme design
   - teaching/training methods
   - advice/guidance
   - access
   - support
   - programme content
   - assessment/exams

   etc.

   (It might be useful to work with colleagues from the same subject/programme area, so your personal action plans can relate to one another.)
2. Identify a task or series of tasks, which you can achieve. Your first step might be very small but if everyone in your establishment makes one small step, a positive start will have been made.

   Some examples:
   - checking that the content of your work is appropriately organised;
   - making sure that trainees/students can get into the workplace;
   - giving colleagues positive support.
3. State how it will improve provision for trainees/students with special education/training needs
4. Set a date by which you will have carried out the task.
5. Contract with another course member to check with each other by the specified date whether or not the plan has been carried out.

Guidelines for facilitators

At the end of the session, you may wish to ask participants to read out their plans to the group to receive feedback and suggestions.

The personal action plans may be photocopied and circulated after the session.

It is useful to set a follow-up session/review date for the whole group.

TASK SHEET G

Name ______________________________

1. To enhance participation by trainees/students with special needs in the life of my own institution, I will:

2. This action will improve our provision in the following way:

3. I will do it by:

4. I will contract with ______________________________ (name)

to check that I have done it, by ______________________________ (date)

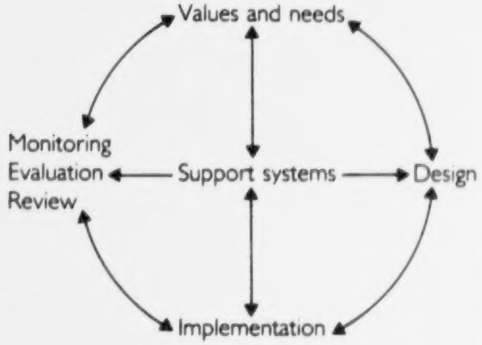
4. ESTABLISHING A FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this section is to give an overview of the complex processes involved in the development of a training programme/curriculum. The underlying principles are the same for any group of learners, but are considered here in relation to trainees/students with special needs.

The questions of how to develop a programme, where to start and what to take into account are familiar, and everyone has probably found answers to some of these already.

Presented here is a framework which many staff will recognise as the curriculum model to be found in various FEU publications and which they are likely to have found useful already. The key word is *framework*. It is often valuable to have a complete overview of what you want to do and how you want to do it, before launching into the detail.

A MODEL FRAMEWORK



THE FEATURES OF THE FRAMEWORK

The first point to note is that it is circular. This is deliberate, for programme development is best seen as a circular process. It is not something which you do once, but something which needs to be repeated in a series of processes which enable you to review, then adjust and improve any element of the framework.

SIGNPOST

Element 2. **Curriculum/ Training Programme Design and Evaluation Strategies,** looks at this process in detail.

Secondly, in a circular process it is possible to start at any point. It may be the case that you have been presented with a programme which you have to implement, or you may have a final evaluation of a programme which you then want to modify for the next year or session intake. The model allows for this. It also shows what main features should be taken into account.

VALUES AND NEEDS

These are the basic building blocks of any programme.

The values and attitudes which you possess affect the way you think about the learners, so developing a positive attitude towards trainees/students with special needs is crucial. This involves starting from what the trainees/students *can* do rather than viewing them as deficient in some way. It serves to focus attention on their needs and how you can enable them to be satisfied.

SIGNPOST

Element 3. **Devising Individual Learning Programmes** offers a step-by-step approach to this process, based on an analysis of individual needs.

Consideration must also be given to the context in which learning is to take place. Knowing what is expected and why enables you to plan and develop more effectively.

Above all else, identifying and analysing the needs of the trainee/student helps to make the programme relevant.

DESIGN

Design is the process by which values and needs are translated into relevant programmes. The resulting programmes are likely to range from standard off-the-shelf courses leading to recognised national qualifications, to courses/programmes specially designed for groups, organisations or individuals.

The key features of design are:

- the consideration and statement of your intentions (usually via aims and objectives);
- the application of such principles as equality of opportunity, flexibility and progression in planning;
- the selection of appropriate strategies for delivery and assessment;
- the consideration of how trainees/students learn best.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation is the process by which programme design is delivered to the trainee/student and it involves ensuring that the trainees/students obtain the fullest benefits from the learning opportunities provided.

People with special needs are unlikely to be best catered for through 'chalk and talk' teaching methods in which the learner is passive. A full range of learning opportunities will be required.

If programme design is based on such principles as equality, flexibility and progression, it follows that a broader range of teaching, training and learning strategies is likely to be needed. Building on previous experience, and widening and deepening understanding suggests the need for a variety of approaches.

SIGNPOST

This is discussed in detail in Element 6, **Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials.**

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The trainees'/students' success can be assessed by the progress that they make and the development of skills and/or knowledge.

To judge the effectiveness of the programme, it is necessary to collect appropriate information about its structure and operation in relation to meeting needs. Having made judgements about the relative strengths and weaknesses, modifications can then be made to the appropriate parts.

The processes involved here are monitoring, evaluation and review.

Monitoring is usually taken to mean the continuous scrutiny of the performance of a programme as it is running; checking the effectiveness of organisation, learner support and learning materials.

Evaluation involves the collection of information on a more structured, periodic basis from all participants.

There are many ways of carrying out monitoring and evaluation; interviews, log books and questionnaires are used frequently, but it is important to use approaches which will provide most effectively the information which you require.

The information gathered forms the basis for **review** – the process by which all or part of the programme is appraised. The involvement of all participants is important. Through this process, guidelines on how to improve the quality of the programme will emerge (for example, the reordering of the content, the reidentification of needs, the use of different learning strategies.)

SIGNPOST

The processes of monitoring, evaluation and review are detailed in the final section of Element 2, **Curriculum/Training Programme Design and Evaluation Strategies**

SIGNPOST

The processes of review and assessment of trainee/student progress and achievement are detailed in Element 4, **Assessment and Review**

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

No programme can be designed or delivered in a vacuum, it requires support systems to make it work. The success or failure of provision for learners with special needs depends more than other forms of provision on adequate support systems.

Support systems can fulfil the following functions:

- formulation of broad principles and policy within the institution;
- provision and management of resources (including staff, materials and equipment);
- arrangements for co-operation with other agencies;
- provision of advice and guidance services for both staff and learners.

With a range this wide, knowing what support is needed when, and how and where to get it, makes all the difference.

SIGNPOST

Element 9, **Sources of Help and Advice,** examines support systems in-house, locally, regionally and nationally.

SIGNPOST

Element 8, **Guidance and Support**, assists the development of personal guidance skills.

Here, then, is a framework for development. As each feature has been explained and explored a number of questions were raised. The rest of this package attempts to help in finding the answers.

SECTION 5. APPLYING THE FRAMEWORK

● ● ● EXERCISE 10. THE FRAMEWORK IN PRACTICE

Small group activity

This exercise is designed to help you become more familiar with the programme development model outlined above. It enables you to examine all aspects of the cycle, in this case using the starting point of an evaluation of a course or training programme.

You will need:

- either to use your own evaluation of a course/programme which you are currently running;
- or to use an example from elsewhere.

Each group should act as a review group for the course/programme.

Look at the evaluation presented. It suggests the need for some modifications to the programme.

What issues do you need to consider?

Do these issues relate to: – analysis of need?
– design?
– implementation?
– evaluation?
– support?

Are there any other important issues?

Add these to your list.

Keep a copy of the course/training programme outline available for the next activity.

● ● ● EXERCISE 11. APPLYING THE PROCESS TO MEET INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Small group activity

This exercise enables you to apply the process outlined in the framework in order to meet the special needs of some individual trainees/students.

You will need either some case-history examples of your own trainees/students or to use the examples given in the **Resources Section**. (You will be meeting these people at various points throughout the pack.)

Take the course outline from Exercise 10.

Attempt to answer the following questions as they apply to the above individuals.

1. **Analysis of need**

   To what extent does the programme meet the actual rather than apparent needs of the trainee/student?

2. **Design**

   How does the programme lend itself to individual trainee's/student's needs?

3. **Implementation**

   How can the learning approaches be made more responsive to the needs of trainees/students?

SIGNPOST

If you have not yet decided which element to study next, refer to 'Analysing the needs identified' on Page 12 of the **User's Guide**

4. **Evaluation**

   What are the important issues in judging the effectiveness of the programme for each trainee/student?

5. **Support**

   What extra support mechanisms are necessary for teacher/ trainer and learner?

You may have had some difficulty in answering these questions. The rest of this package seeks to help you look for the answers.

SUMMARY

EVALUATION CHECK-LIST

You should now be able to:

- recognise and counter the effects of stereotyped images and assumptions;
- understand the difference between the terms: impairment, disability, handicap and special education/training needs;
- recognise the negative connotations of some terminology in current usage and avoid using such terms;
- describe trainees/students with special needs in positive terms;
- describe how the experience of not feeling 'able' may affect attitudes towards you and your own view of yourself;
- identify the major features of your institution's policy on special needs;
- consider the factors which facilitate or inhibit participation by trainees/students with special needs, in your workplace;
- define and implement a task or series of tasks, which will promote the participation of trainees/students with special needs in your workplace.

2

LEARNING SUPPORT

CURRICULUM /TRAINING PROGRAMME DESIGN AND EVALUATION STRATEGIES

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INTRODUCTION

All successful programmes need sound design principles and experience has shown that there are principles common to all programme planning. Careful attention to detail is essential to enable the full participation of learners with special education/training needs. This involves having a shared clear sense of purpose and direction, developing appropriate strategies for progress and being sensitive to the learners' responses.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What is the process for designing curriculum/training programmes?
- How do you establish aims and objectives?
- What principles and strategies will you use?
- How will you judge the effectiveness of your programme?

AIMS

- To explore the process of designing a curriculum/training programme.
- To consider the implications of the needs of learners with special education/training needs in relation to the design process.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this element you should be able to:

- write appropriate programme aims;
- express objectives in terms of identifiable outcomes;
- use principles to inform programme design for learners with special needs;
- identify and apply appropriate strategies for the delivery of the programme;
- collect appropriate information to enable you to monitor the design;
- use appropriate processes to evaluate the programme;
- design a curriculum/training programme.

Links to other elements include the following:

From the **Introductory Element** you will remember that a model for training programme development was explored.

SIGNPOST
Introductory Element – Section 3

Programme design was a main feature of that model.

What does it entail?

The main points are:

- the consideration and statement of your intentions;
- the use of appropriate design principles;
- the selection of appropriate strategies for delivery;
- procedures for monitoring and review.

Each of these points will be considered in turn.

1. ESTABLISHING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Teaching and training are activities with a purpose. They are intended to enable learners to achieve some desired outcomes. In designing a programme, then, you need to ask:

Where are the learners going?

How are they going to get there?

In choosing the general direction, the selection may seem endless. However, most staff are working within the context of a particular scheme, framework or syllabus and each of these tends to identify the intentions in some form. The following chart indicates some current examples.

The choice then is restricted by being in *receipt* of these sorts of aims and objectives. They frame the overall context within which intentions are expressed.

SIGNPOST

Element 3, Devising Individual Learning Programmes. If you are unsure about how to identify and analyse learner needs you should refer to this section.

The other major factors which must be taken into account are the needs of the learners. Unless you are aware of these your programme design runs the risk of not being relevant and consequently failing. Your intentions must attempt to meet learners' needs.

SIGNPOST

Introductory Element.

The focus on individual skills, knowledge and attitudes means that there is a need to co-ordinate the work of individual staff who are having an input into the course/programme. It is no longer possible for staff to work in isolation.

Increasingly staff are finding it valuable to work in teams.

Teams:

- are groups of staff who have responsibility for the planning and/or delivery of programmes;
- are usually co-ordinated by a leader who makes possible the implementation of a programme;
- enable integrated planning of a programme;
- allow individual staff to work to their strengths and yet see their work in relation to the whole programme;
- provide mutual support for members;
- offer opportunities to share ideas, materials and approaches;
- reduce feeling of isolation.

Individual staff may not have direct responsibility for the overall aims and objectives of the course/training programme. However, to be effective they have to understand what these are and to decide how best they can contribute to these within their own area of expertise. Effective team organisation offers an appropriate way of making this possible.

AIMS	CPVE	YTS(2)	TVEI	ADULT PROGRAMMES	GCSE
SOURCE: **Paragraph [26]** ***Relevance, Flexibility and Competence***	SOURCE: *The Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education Parts A and B*	SOURCE: *Development of the Youth Training Scheme*	SOURCE: *TVEI Review 1984*	SOURCE: [A] DES ***Adult Unemployed Programme (REPLAN) – Aims and Objectives.*** [B] ACSET: ***Staff Development for Post-Experience Vocational Education.*** [C] ACACE. ***Continuing Education: From Policies to Practice.***	SOURCE: *GCSE General Criteria, 1985*
[i] Appropriate learning opportunities regardless of gender, race, age and ability.	The aims of CPVE are to: . . . provide individually relevant educational experience, which encourages learning and achievement. Schools and colleges must make provision for Additional Studies . . . to allow for particular educational needs.	The Commission will be looking for an active commitment from all employers to provide training opportunities for disabled and disadvantaged young people. . . . the Scheme will be open to all young people within the range of eligibility regardless of race, sex or disability . . .	Equal opportunities should be available to young people of both sexes . . . Care should be taken to avoid sex stereotyping.	Development for Post-Experience Vocational Education. [A] Dissemination of information and guidance on good and successful practice and advice on removal or reduction of barriers . . . [B] To identify quickly students' relevant prior experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes, either to take account of them in their teaching or to remedy those which are likely to prove obstacles to the aims of the new courses.	It will be designed not for any proportion of the ability range, but for all candidates . . . there is no minimum or maximum age of entry for the examination . . . every possible effort must be made to ensure that syllabuses and examinations are free of political, ethnic, gender, and other forms of bias.
[ii] Opportunities for all learners to establish a recognised competence-base of knowledge, skills and experience sufficient to facilitate progression into: • employment • further education • training or other roles	. . . assist the transition from school to adulthood by further equipping young people with basic skills, experiences, attitudes, knowledge and personal and social competences required for success in adult life, including work. . . . provide young people with recognition of their attainments through a qualification which embodies national standards. . . . provide opportunities for progression to continuing education, training and/or work.	Young trainees must be provided with opportunities to achieve competence in a range of core skills . . . a two-year training framework should normally provide a broad base of foundation training leading towards more specific vocational training in the second year. All trainees should seek to acquire a vocational qualification or a credit towards such a qualification . . . of such a nature as to be able to ensure for the young trainee opportunities for progression in employment, further education or training. Trainees need to acquire skills that are common across different occupational areas and different sectors.	Throughout the programme there should be both a general and a technical/vocational element. Students should normally be preparing for one or more nationally recognised qualification . . . On completing their studies, students should be issued by the LEA with a record of achievment. . . . programmes . . . should provide four-year curricula, with progression from year to year, designed to prepare the student for particular aspects of employment and for adult life in a society liable to rapid change.	[A] Augmenting general skills at all levels in ways which may help improve employabilit, and be useful in everyday activities. [A] Equipping individuals to go on to further study, enabling them to attain new qualifications. [B] To acquire and keep up to date an appropriate body of knowledge.	All examinations must be designed so that candidates across the ability range are given opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, abilities, and achievements: that is, to show what they know, understand and can do.

[iii] An understanding of the local and national economic and social environment, to promote an appreciation of the variety of available adult roles.	. . . assist the transition from school to adulthood by further equipping young people with basic skills, experiences, attitudes, knowledge required for success in adult life . . . . . . Exploratory Modules are designed to help students to explore a variety of roles within the cluster . . . (Main aim of Industrial, Social and Environmental Studies) To develop knowledge of the workings of modern industry and society and a capacity to cope with the limitations and opportunities afforded.	Young trainees must have the opportunities to develop and demonstrate their ability to transfer skills and knowledge to new tasks, new jobs and new locations.	. . . programmes . . . should provide four-year curricula with progression from year to year, designed to prepare the student for particular aspects of employment and of adult life in a society liable to rapid change. The technical and vocational elements should be broadly related to potential employment opportunities within and outside the geographical area for the young people concerned.	[A] Helping individuals to take stock of their situation and form a realistic view of the options open to them. [C] A democratic society can only be sustained by its individual citizens' ability to take part in and contribute to economic, social and cultural change growth.	Awareness of economic, political, social and environmental factors relevant to the subject which should be encouraged wherever appropriate.
[iv] A basis for learners to increase their self-awareness, to appraise realistically their potential and prospects, and to become progressively responsible for their own personal development.	Activity-based learning also provides the basis for encouraging student self-reliance, development and increasing autonomy. Preparatory Modules are intended to help students to . . . refine preferences and identify opportunities for progression. Work experience . . . provides young people with . . . opportunity to receive 'feedback' on the way they are regarded as workers . . . opportunity to check what levels of competence are adequate to the demands of work . . .	The schemes must allow for young trainees to develop maturity, self-reliance, inter-personal qualities that are used generally in employment and in adult life. These are all qualities upon which employers place great emphasis in the selection, development and promotion of staff. Part of the purpose of the developed schemes is to enable the individual young person to become a fully independent adult and to acquire the status of a qualified worker.	More emphasis is placed on developing initiative, motivation and enterprise as well as problem solving skills and other aspects of personal development. Arrangements should be made for regular assessment and for students and tutors to discuss students' performance or progress.	[A] Enabling the unemployed through self-evaluation to understand changed circumstances and to adjust accordingly. [B] To identify the motives and needs of students . . . and to establish positive links between the two. [C] Every country should ensure the highest possible levels of self-reliance . . . among all its citizens, for both their individual and collective well-being.	All syllabuses should be designed to help candidates to understand the subject's relationship to other areas of study and its relevance to the candidate's own life. The examination is intended to record what those leaving full-time education of 16+ have achieved and also to serve as a basis for further study and for entry into training.

(From *Relevance, Flexibility and Competence*, FEU, 1987)

HOW ARE YOUR INTENTIONS EXPRESSED?

Different styles are used by staff.

- One approach is to express intentions as anticipated learner outcomes. In other words what the learner will be able to do, know and understand.
- Another approach is to focus on the activity of the teacher or trainer and the conditions or processes through which learning is to occur.

In both cases the statements vary from the broad to the specific. The broad statements constitute *aims* and the specific statements, *objectives*.

To summarise:

Intentions are expressed as:

Either	or
Learner outcomes	**Teacher/trainer activity**
What the learner will be able to: ● do ● know ● understand	What processes and procedures will be used, to effect learning?
Broad Specific < -------------------------- > Aims Objectives	Broad Specific < -------------------------- > Aims Objectives

MORE ABOUT AIMS

When establishing aims it is often useful to ask yourself some questions. Here is a list which you may find useful.

- What is the overall purpose of providing a programme?
- What kinds of knowledge and skills will be useful to learners?
- Where and how does what I intend fit in to the overall purpose?
- What are the priorities for learners?
- Why are they priorities?
- How will I know that the intentions have been fulfilled?

EXERCISE 1. WRITING AIMS

Individual/Small group activity

Establishing and interpreting aims is a useful way of giving direction to your work.

The purpose of this activity is to enable you to practise and develop your skills in drafting aims. Through doing it you should:

- come to a clearer understanding of how they can be written;
- share your ideas on the general intentions of providing a programme for learners with special needs.

1. Use the question check-list above to:

either write a set of aims for a programme you know about,

or write a set of aims for a programme which allows learners with special needs to establish a recognised basis of knowledge, skills and attitudes to allow progression into:

- employment
- further education
- training
- adult life

(You may wish to concentrate on one or two of these areas.)

● ● ●

Small group activity

2. Compare the aims you have written with those of colleagues.
3. Discuss any variations which seem significant. What does this tell you about your approaches/intentions? How and why do your perceptions vary?

MORE ABOUT OBJECTIVES

Often one of the main features of working with learners with special needs is the value of using short steps in the learning process. Some learners find difficulty in making sense of a whole process. They learn more effectively if they master the component elements of a process one at a time. Others need help in transferring a skill they have learnt in one setting to another (for example using keyboard skills developed on a typewriter when faced with a wordprocessor keyboard). This is because the style of learning tends to be concrete, i.e. related to the practical situation and also limited by the situation. Links between different situations are not automatically made.

SIGNPOST
Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes

Stating objectives helps to clarify those links and steps. Such clarification not only helps planning, but also gives the learners a picture of where they are going and how they are going to get there. This has been found to be an important motivating factor in many cases.

When you write objectives you should focus on what you expect the learner to do *during* the learning process or be able to do *by the end* of the process. This is an important distinction. The former focuses on the ways or *process* of doing something. The latter gives emphasis to the outcome or *product*. Much depends on whether you see the way things are done, or the final result as important.

Take for example the development of arithmetic skills. You may want to concentrate on the ways in which calculations are done so that the learner can transfer the skill to any context. Alternatively you may want right answers and worry less about 'how they are obtained'.

This analogy shows in fact that both process and product are significant. For some learners with special needs detailing the steps aids learning. For others, who may not be able to use conventional means, allowing flexibility to achieve the same end has value. Thus you should state objectives in the way which best suits learners' needs.

● ● ● EXERCISE 2. GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Small group activity

How specific should an objective be? This is an important consideration when deciding on the steps you intend to include. The purpose of this exercise is to clarify what are general and specific objectives.

1. Look at the following objectives:
   a) That the learner will understand the workings of the motor car.
   b) That the learner will list the main components which make a motor car go.
2. Examine objectives (a) and (b) and consider their characteristics and relationship.
   - How are these objectives linked?
   - What are their differences?

The relationship between objectives (a) and (b) can be explained by stating that objective (b) is part of objective (a); that is, being able to list the main components will help the learner to understand the workings of a motor car.

Objective (a) is therefore, a *general* objective. While it indicates what is generally expected of the learner, it does not show what the learner is to do to show that he/she 'understands the workings of the motor car'.

Objective (b) is a *specific* objective. The activity expected is identified, thus giving the learner the opportunity to demonstrate that the general objective is being attained.

When does a specific objective become a general objective?

No one knows. They simply have tendencies towards one end or another of a continuum from general to specific.

The questions, 'how will I know what the learners are to learn?' and 'how will the learner know what they are to learn?' are more important for programme design.

The key to writing objectives is the verb that you use to describe the learners' behaviour. Accuracy and clarity come from using verbs which have a precise meaning.

● ● ● EXERCISE 3. USING WORDS IN OBJECTIVES

Small group activity

This exercise is designed to help you clarify the precision with which you should use words.

1. Look at the list of words below which are often encountered in objectives.
2. In groups, decide which are open to few and which to many interpretations.

- appreciate
- write
- know
- answer
- compare
- understand
- grasp
- list
- draw

WRITING OBJECTIVES

The key to writing objectives is the verb you use to describe learner behaviour.

General objectives usually include the following words:

- appreciate
- fully appreciate
- grasp the significance of
- know
- understand

Specific objectives usually include the following words:

- answer
- compare
- enjoy
- listen
- recognise
- ask
- contrast
- identify
- measure
- state
- attend
- describe
- label
- name
- type
- calculate
- draw
- list
- read
- write

CLASSIFYING OBJECTIVES

To clarify our thinking about objectives, several academics have suggested that objectives may be written in areas of different types of learning. For example, learners may learn to do things with their hands, or with their 'brains' or may learn new attitudes. Obviously these three areas or 'domains' are connected, but being aware of the three domains has helped some teachers and trainers with their work. The three domains are better known as:

- cognitive domain – 'head'
- psychomotor domain – 'hand'
- affective domain – 'heart'

The most widely known classification of educational objectives is that associated with the American, B S Bloom, and his associates. While controversy surrounds the value of classification, it is certainly worth spending some time studying it.

The Bloom's taxonomy can help you in two ways:

1. It attempts to organise objectives in the three domains.
2. Within each domain, an attempt is made to outline a hierarchy of objectives in order of difficulty.

A brief outline of Bloom's taxonomy is given on the following pages.

COGNITIVE DOMAIN

Knowledge – lowest form of learning in this domain, the learner is required to remember previously learned material.

Comprehension – incorporates above and requires the learner to grasp the meaning of the material.

Application – incorporates above and requires the learner to use the material in new situations.

Analysis – incorporates above and requires the learner to break down material.

Synthesis – incorporates above and requires the learner to put the parts together to form a new whole.

Evaluation – incorporates above and requires the learner to judge the value of material for a given purpose.

Verbs used in this domain include:

- categorises
- describes
- justifies
- selects
- concludes
- contrasts
- explains
- relates
- states
- identifies

- defines
- predicts
- solves
- reorganises
- summarises

PSYCHOMOTOR DOMAIN

The heirachy of skills in this domain is incomplete but verbs in this domain include:

- assembles
- cleans
- corrects
- drills
- hammers
- mends
- sews
- builds
- composes
- creates
- fastens
- heats
- nails
- wraps
- sketches
- calibrates
- connects
- designs
- fixes
- makes
- paints
- weighs
- changes
- constructs
- dismantles
- grips
- manipulates
- saws

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

Receiving – lowest form of learning in this domain, the learner is required to attend willingly particular phenomena or stimuli.

Responding – incorporates above and requires the learner to react to the phenomenon.

Valuing – incorporates above and requires the learner to value the phenomenon.

Organisation – incorporates above and requires the learner to bring together different values, resolving conflicts between them, and beginning the building of an internally consistent value system.

Characterising a value or value complex – incorporates above and requires the learner to show that he/she has developed a characteristic 'life-style'.

Verbs used in this domain include:

- ask
- initiate
- show awareness
- assist
- listen
- show concern
- give
- read
- show interest
- hold
- share
- show sensitivity

BEHAVIOURAL OBJECTIVES APPROACH

For some learners with special needs, this approach has much to commend it. It provides:

- a clear statement of what they should be able to do by the end of a learning session;
- the level or standard required;
- the conditions under which the activity can be achieved;
- a *focus* on the learners and what *they* are to learn.

This approach usually begins by finding out what the learner can do before the course begins; if the learner can already do half of what you intend to teach him/her, then the learner and you are wasting half your time. Once it has been established what the learner can and cannot do, the course can be adjusted to suit the need of the learners. Of course, identifying 'entry behaviour' is not the sole property of the behavioural objectives approach and can be used in the planning of all courses/programmes.

SIGNPOST

Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes
Introductory Element
Element 5. Training/teaching and learning strategies (Task analysis)

The other central feature of this approach is the precision required in writing a behavioural objective. For example, consider the following objective:

- The learner will write an essay on the workings of the motor car.

How precise is this objective? Do you know what the learners will be doing?

Consider these questions next.

Given the objective 'the learner will write an essay on the workings of the motor car', it seems acceptable for the learner to copy an essay from a text-book. Thus the learner will have achieved the objective and learned nothing as presumably the learner was already able to copy essays from textbooks. While this may seem pedantic, it is often a feature of a behavioural objective that the conditions and constraints qualifying terminal behaviour are stated.

The objective could now be rewritten as follows:

That 'the learner will write an essay identifying the main working parts of the motor car under the following conditions and constraints:

1. The learner may use textbooks and other written information.
2. The learners may not talk to each other.
3. The essay will be completed in two hours.'

What is now missing from this objective is an indication of the standard that will be acceptable to you as the teacher or trainer. What are you looking for? How will you identify a 'good' answer, a 'satisfactory' answer or a 'failure'? You could state that the learner will include a minimum of 10 of the 20 points included in the marking scheme and that marks will be given for well organised work.

Thus a behavioural objective often includes:

1. the stated terminal behaviour;
2. conditions and constraints qualifying terminal behaviour;
3. standards of terminal performance.

The behavioural objective approach has been criticised because:

- it only identifies the end product and not *how* the product is to be achieved;
- it is fairly rigid, not allowing learners to choose courses of action;
- it concentrates too much on the fine detail, so that the overall purpose is lost;
- it can emphasise the 'trivial', i.e. what is easy to observe and measure while overlooking the significant;
- it can lead to a focus on the quantity of response, rather than the quality (i.e. how many times the learner got the 'right' result, not whether they understood how and why they achieved the result).

ALTERNATIVE TO OBJECTIVES APPROACH

The traditional method of planning a course is to examine the content, design objectives and organise learner activity to achieve the objectives. Another approach is to consider the activities in which learners should be involved and use content as a 'vehicle' to involve learners in these activities. Some examining and validating bodies have tended to move towards this approach. J D Raths in 'Teaching without Specific Objectives' (Education Leadership, April 1971), identified the following 'worthwhile activities' as a guide to curriculum/programme planning:

1. If it permits learners to make informed choices and to reflect on the consequences of their choices.

2. If it assigns to learners active roles in the learning situation rather than passive ones.
3. If it asks learners to engage in enquiry into ideas.
4. If it involves learners with reality.
5. If completion of the activity may be accomplished successfully by learners at several different levels of ability.
6. If it asks learners to examine in a new setting an idea, an application of an intellectual process, or a current problem which has been studied previously.
7. If it requires learners to examine topics or issues that citizens in our society do not normally examine.
8. If it involves risk taking, i.e. a risk to success or failure.
9. If it requires learners to rewrite, rehearse and polish their initial efforts.
10. If it involves the mastery of meaningful rules, standards or disciplines.
11. If it gives learners a chance to share the planning, the carrying out of a plan, or the results of an activity with others.
12. If it is relevant to the expressed purposes of the learner.

The issues raised by these alternative approaches are best considered in relation to the needs of the learners. In cases where the learners require small, precise steps, the behavioural objectives approach has considerable value. Tying down other learners to this approach may lead to frustration and lack of motivation. For them a more flexible set of alternatives may prove valuable.

EXERCISE 4. LINKING OBJECTIVES TO AIMS

Small group activity

It must always be remembered that objectives are not established in a vacuum. They have to be derived from the overall programme/course aims if the latter are to be fulfilled.

The purpose of this exercise is to enable you to practise writing different types of objectives related to overall aims.

1. Look at the aims you established in Exercise 1.
2. Select one or two of them.
3. (a) Write a set of behavioural objectives appropriate for learners who would benefit from a short-step approach. You may find it helpful to refer to the case-studies from the Resources Section.

   (b) Write a set of general process objectives for learners who would benefit from a flexible approach.
4. Compare each set in mixed groups. Discuss whether the statements:
   a) meet the aim;
   b) suit the learners' needs.

2. DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Having established learner needs and expressed them in the form of aims and objectives the question to be asked is:

What principles shall I use in designing the programme? There is a wealth of information on programme design to guide you.

From these a fairly consistent set of design principles has emerged.

Programmes should:

- be learner centred
- provide for access/equal opportunities
- have space for negotiation
- provide assessment and accreditation
- provide for progression
- make available guidance, advice and support
- be flexible
- be competence based
- build in evaluation
- be co-ordinated

● ● ●

EXERCISE 5. WHAT THE PRINCIPLES MEAN

Small group activity

You may have heard or read of these terms. For them to be effectively implemented there is a need for some shared understanding of their meaning. This will help you to make an appropriate contribution to the programme/course. This exercise provides you with the opportunity to establish shared understanding.

1. Each group select two principles from the list.
2. Discuss what the terms mean and come to some shared understanding.
3. Write down your understanding.
4. Feed back your definitions to the rest of the group.

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Guidelines to facilitators

- Five groups will enable all principles to be covered. If there are only a few members present then you could treat the principles sequentially.
- To ensure that the shared understanding corresponds to commonly held meanings, feed in the set of questions about each principle provided in the following pages.

We now look at these principles in further detail. For each principle a set of pertinent questions is posed.

LEARNER CENTREDNESS

SIGNPOST
Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes

SIGNPOST
Element 5. Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies

- How do you get the learner to the starting line?
- What do they need to be able to cope?
- What needs has the learner identified?
- How do you help a group support an individual with special needs?
- How do you manage time and space to take account of needs?
- How do you break down the programme into easily achievable steps?

ACCESSIBILITY

SIGNPOST
User's Guide

SIGNPOST
Element 8. Guidance and Support

SIGNPOST
Element 5. Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies

- How do you market the programme?
- How is it presented?
- What is the climate of the setting like: welcoming? off-putting?
- What are the attitudes of colleagues and other learners towards those with special needs?
- How do you establish awareness?
- Who will speak for the learners: others? themselves?
- What information do you need to know from the learners in order to make a programme accessible?
- Where do you get it from?
- What aids and adaptations are necessary regarding equipment, learning materials, the physical environment?
- What additional support is required by the learners to enable them to participate fully?
- How do you gauge the emotional needs of the learners? How do you enable learners to cope with the course on offer?

NEGOTIATION

SIGNPOST
Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes

SIGNPOST
Element 8. Guidance and Support

- What is negotiable?
- Who negotiates: everybody?
- What skills do the learners need in order to negotiate?
- How do they identify and communicate needs?
- How do they make choices and take action?
- How do they come to accept the consequences of decisions?
- How do you act on what has been negotiated?
- How do you build in review: ongoing? phased?

ASSESSMENT

SIGNPOST
Element 4. Assessment and Review

- What is to be assessed: prior learning? initial abilities? developing abilities? what the learner has achieved?
- When does assessment take place: at the beginning? ongoing? at the end?
- How do you assess?
- What tools do you use?
- What language do you use?
- What size of steps do you apply?

PROGRESSION

SIGNPOST
User's Guide

- Where does the programme fit into the development of the learner?
- How does your element fit into the whole programme?
- What does it lead to?
- How does it relate to the development of the learner?

GUIDANCE, ADVICE AND SUPPORT

SIGNPOST
Element 8. Guidance and support

- What mechanisms do you provide for these?
- Who is the first point of contact for the learner?
- When do you seek more specialist support?
- How do the learners resolve their problems/worries?
- How does the learner know where to get guidance, advice and support?

FLEXIBILITY

SIGNPOST
Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes

SIGNPOST
Element 5. Training/Teaching and Learning Strategies

SIGNPOST
Element 6. Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials

- Does the programme allow for modification?
- How do you respond to changes?
- Does the programme enable learners to develop at their own pace?
- What variety of opportunities and learning experiences is in the programme?

COMPETENCE

SIGNPOST
Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes

SIGNPOST
Element 4. Assessment and Review

SIGNPOST
Element 5. Training/Teaching and Learning Strategies

At the end of the programme:

- What skills will the learners have?
- What will the learners be able to do?
- What will they know and understand?
- What attitudes will they possess?
- How do you measure these?
- What standards do you apply?

EVALUATION

SIGNPOST

Section 5, Evaluation and review at the end of this element

- How do you judge the process the learners undertake?
- How do you judge your own performance?
- What review procedures do you use to act on the evaluation?
- How do you modify future programmes as a consequence of review?

CO-ORDINATION

SIGNPOST

User's Guide

SIGNPOST

Introductory Element

- How do you ensure that the elements of the programme fit together?
- How do you enable learners to have a coherent experience?
- Do you have a team approach to design and delivery?

These lists of questions identify key elements of each principle of design.

To find the answers you will need to make reference to appropriate elements of the package identified, and to undertake the activity at the beginning of this section in order to work out answers in relation to your own context.

There are no universal answers. Specific programme planning will be determined by the application of the principles to:

- your situation
- the particular needs of your learners
- the context – course/framework/scheme
- physical environment

3. STRATEGIES

How, in general terms, is the curriculum/training programme going to be implemented, i.e. what strategy will you use?

In making decisions on this you will need to take account of:

- programme aims and objectives
- the needs of learners
- principles which apply
- the nature of existing provision
- available resources

The first three of these have already been considered. The latter two are related to your particular context.

So then, what are strategies? They are for example:

- approaches to the delivery of course/training programme;
- plans laid to use resources available to implement principles and aims. Particularly the latter relate to the frameworks for implementation.

Some specific examples:

Modular < -------------- > Linear
Individual < -------------- > Group
In-house < -------------- > Outreach
Single agency < -------------- > Multi-agency
Staff-led < -------------- > Open learning

Which end of the continuum?

Notice that each strategy has been expressed on a 'continuum'. In practice it is unlikely that each extreme of the continuum is used exclusively. For example a totally individualised programme carries the danger of not stimulating interactive and co-operative skills. A group-based programme runs the risk of not catering sufficiently to individual needs. In the majority of cases a position along the continuum will have been chosen to take account of the range of issues identified above.

Thus in the case of the individual – group strategy, available staff resources may not be sufficient to allow for a totally individualised programme.

What about the relationship principles?

The design principles (identified in the previous section) should be reflected in the strategies employed. For example, if flexibility is accepted as a principle, then a linear strategy may be inappropriate. Similarly, access may be compromised by making provision in-house if appropriate adaptations are not available.

Are these strategies mutually exclusive?

No. It is possible to combine the strategies. To take an extreme example:

A programme could be: modular, group based, in-house, multi-agency, staff-led.

This example illustrates that strategies could, and should, be used in conjunction.

EXERCISE 6. DESIGNING A COURSE/TRAINING PROGRAMME

Whole group activity

The development of the team approaches to planning has led to the need for all staff involved in a course/training programme to understand its overall implications.

This exercise gives you the opportunity to explore and practise the processes involved in planning.

Small group activity

1. Read the case-study provided.
2. Act as the design team for the course/training programme.
3. Design an outline programme for the learners.

To do this you will need to:

- write course aims;
- apply appropriate design principles;
- select and write down strategies for delivery.

Guidelines for facilitators

There are two case-studies provided (one for FE, one for YTS).

Either choose an appropriate case-study to use with the group,

or use the exercise to help in the design of a programme you are planning.

You may find it useful to refer to:

- *YTS Training for Skills* (MSC, 1986)
- *YTS Special Training Needs – A Code of Practice* (1988)
- *CPVE Parts A/B* (Joint Board for Pre-Vocational Education, 1985)
- *Relevance, Flexibility and Competence* (FEU, 1987)

YTS CASE-STUDY

Community Services Unit is a community based YTS scheme that has been involved in youth training for eight years. All the trainees on the scheme attract premium funding and, in addition to the range of special needs that these young people bring, there are a number of trainees with Permanent Additional Funding for Disablement (PAFD) who have quite specific special training needs related to disability. The scheme offers training in Construction, Retail and Caring and, after an initial induction period of three weeks, trainees have to decide which vocational route to follow. They then carry out a programme of planned work experience on placement with off-the-job courses run by scheme staff at a training centre.

Based on the document *YTS, Special Training Needs – A Code of Practice*, the management of a scheme has decided to offer all trainees a broad-based foundation course from which they will be able to progress into a more directly vocational programme at any point in their first year. The course will follow the guidelines of the code of practice:

> '. . . foundation training and development can vary in length according to individual needs. It is aimed at developing personal effectiveness, e.g. trainee motivation, self-sufficiency, communication skills, initiative and acceptance of responsibility where necessary, so that young people can make progress in all of the YTS outcomes.'

(*YTS Special Training Needs – A Code of Practice*)

FE CASE-STUDY

Wybridge FE College has six departments: construction, business studies and office arts, health care and beauty therapy, modern studies, science and technology, special/community needs.

It is situated on two sites, three miles apart. The main site is in the centre of the town. The departments of construction, and science and technology share the ground floor while the main office, staff rooms and general department with information technology and model office facilities occupy the third floor. The top floor is given over to health care and beauty therapy.

The annexe is a former school building on three storeys. All the rooms are general purpose and the staff of the special and community needs department and the modern studies department are housed here.

The college Academic Board has established a policy to make provision for learners with special needs. The first step was to make both sites accessible for wheelchair users at ground floor level. The main site has a lift, but no clearance has yet been obtained from health and safety officers to make it available to wheelchair users.

As the next stage in policy implementation, the Academic Board has decided to establish an integrated course for a range of learners and it has chosen a CPVE framework to do this.

A group of six staff has been selected (from each department) to design a programme.

The initial intake will be 55 students. Twelve of these already attend the college on a link course with local special schools. Of these twelve, seven have moderate learning difficulties. Additionally, two are visually impaired and three are wheelchair users. Of the other potential students, 15 are drawn from the high band of the local comprehensive, taking six GCSE courses, 20 are drawn from the middle band and 12 are from a remedial unit.

4. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

As has been suggested earlier in the package, curriculum/training programme development is a circular process.

SIGNPOST
Introductory Element

It is vital to have some means of checking the effectiveness of design and implementation. This needs to be thought out at the design stage so that it forms an integral part of the whole process. It is not a 'bolt on' afterthought.

What is evaluation?

- In relation to courses/training programmes it is the process by which evidence is collected to allow judgements to be made about their efficiency and effectiveness.

What is review?

- In relation to courses/training programmes it is the application of evaluation by reappraisal and appropriate amendment of programmes.

Why do it?

- To give information about the effectiveness of programme design.
- To identify strengths and weaknesses in design.
- To review and modify design.
- To provide the most effective possible programme for learners.

How do you evaluate?

- By actively involving learners and staff in making judgements about provision.
- By using a variety of techniques.
- By cross-checking responses.

When do you evaluate?

- At the initial or piloting stages of a programme to form or confirm ideas.
- Throughout the running of the programme to get feedback on the *process* and make (minor) adjustments.
- At the end of the programme to judge its overall effectiveness and inform review and modification.

From the above it becomes clear that any course/training programme should be *monitored* throughout. If you leave the evaluation until the end, then:

- You cannot respond to the changing needs of the learners.
- You cannot identify clearly which parts of the process are successful/unsuccessful.
- The value of any modification is lost to the current group of learners.

Evaluation processes can be developed in different ways. In the following pages we provide some ideas regarding the practicalities. These will help you whether you are directly involved in planning evaluation or asked to participate in information gathering and review.

EXERCISE 7. SELECTING AND COLLECTING

Whole group activity

As a first step in the process you need to decide what information you want and how you intend to collect it.

This activity is designed to help you to make these choices.

1. Brainstorm the information which you think it would be most valuable to collect in making judgements about a programme with reference to:
   - the initial design
   - processes of delivery
   - outcomes.
2. List possible ways of collecting this information.

(You may find it useful to refer to a current training programme or course to focus your ideas.)

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS

These are some of the types of questions that could be asked of both staff and learners as part of the evaluation process.

Purpose of the course

- Do you know what the course is about?
- Are the aims and objectives clear?
- Do you understand what they mean?
- Does the course/programme cater for your needs?

Processes of the course

- What approaches to learning are provided?
- Are these approaches appropriate?
- Is the pace/timing of the programme appropriate?
- Is there a balance between individual and group work?
- Are the methods used understood?
- Are the materials and resources suitable?

Content

- Is the content made clear?
- Is it at the right level?
- Is it in an appropriate order?
- Are the various parts of content integrated?

Support

- Are there appropriate means of providing guidance and advice?
- Is this a regular part of the programme?
- Are there appropriate specialist facilities and resources?

Communication

- Is the information about the programme clear?
- Are there appropriate means for passing information on a routine basis?
- Is the information flow two way?

Assessment

- Are the means of assessment clear?
- Is there variety in the assessment techniques used?
- Are the means appropriate to the learners?
- Are all aspects of learning covered in the assessment?
- Do the learners know what is required of them?

These questions can help you form the basis of information gathering.

EVOLVING EVALUATION

It has been stressed that evaluation should form an integral part of the programme. Therefore it seems sensible that the methods used should arise 'naturally' in almost everything you do.

Here are some ideas.

- The early stages of implementation give an opportunity to get a 'feel' of the programme. Regular and frequent meetings of staff are valuable since they serve to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the initial design and provide support for implementation. If the design has been a shared activity, then commitment to making it work tends to follow. Staff should be encouraged to express their personal views towards the programme.

  When an assignment as work sheet or learning activity is given to the learners, include the objectives and a justification for the work. (This may be in written form, but verbal reports may also be necessary for some learners with special needs.)

- When learners meet staff individually, for example for periodic review, discuss their comments. In addition you can ask the learners for their overall impressions of the course. (Given the emphasis on negotiation and flexibility in design, such meetings will be built in on a regular formal basis, although informal meetings are also typical.)

  As the learner-centred curriculum is about the exercise of learner choice, students should be asked, for example:

  - To what extent are they able to negotiate learning activities?
  - To what extent are they able to exercise choice of work areas/topics?
  - To what extent does the timetable affect this choice?
  - To what extent can the learners decide on the pace of learning?
  - To what extent do they feel there is too much/too little freedom?

- This information can be recorded and shared at regular staff meetings (say every six weeks) to discuss the progress of learners and the programme. Some important questions to ask here include:

  - What are the learners' reactions to the course/programme so far?
  - Where are the strengths and weaknesses in the programme?
  - Is negotiation successful?
  - Why have learners left the programme?
  - What changes need to be made?

This exchange enables ongoing review and modifications to take place.

Both learners and staff can maintain a log or diary of the Programme. Such a device can be used to record both events and reactions to them, and give a picture of the *individual's* experience. By completing it weekly (or even daily) the *detail* is stored. This avoids the problem of trying to recall what happened when, which often results in generalised impressions.

At the end of the course/programme a summary view of it is needed to judge its overall effectiveness and inform any major modification that may be made.

Questions for learners and staff (in a questionnaire format or as an evaluation check-list) usually form the basis of this.

You will probably need information about:

- content – was it appropriate?
- process – did the strategies work?
- value of the experience – did the learners gain enough from it? (Here the log/diary has great benefits.)

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The number of questions asked is best judged by balancing the time needed to complete them against the detail that you require.

The way you ask the questions depends on the learners. They need to be able to answer them (i.e. questions should be short, simple, unambiguous) and the format needs to be appropriate. Remember learners with special needs may find difficulty, for example, with written communication or in understanding questions. Think of this as another learning material and make sure it suits the special needs of the learners.

Once you have the appropriate information from learners and staff, classify it so that an overall picture emerges. It is at this point that you need to meet as a group, to review the findings and modify the programme as appropriate for the subsequent group of learners.

EXERCISE 8. DESIGNING AN EVALUATION STRATEGY

Whole group activity

Evaluation and review are the last essential part of programme design. In order to ensure that proper monitoring takes place an evaluation strategy should be produced at the design stage. In this way a check can be kept on the fulfilment of the aims and objectives and, where necessary, appropriate modification made.

This activity provides a vehicle to develop such a strategy.

small group activity

1. As a group, design an evaluation strategy for a course/training programme you are familiar with.
2. Take into account:
   - initial evaluation of design
   - does it make sense in relation to the needs of the learners?
   - monitoring of course/training programme as it operates
   - are the needs of the learners being met?
   - is the content relevant?
   - are the learning processes used appropriate?
   - is there adequate support?

Final review of the course/training programme:

- Have the aims and objectives been met?
- Does the programme work?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the course/training programme?
- What modifications are required to design, implementation and support?

Any modifications you make to design or implementation will again need to be monitored and reviewed. Different learners have different needs so what suits one particular group may not be appropriate to the next. It is this point which lies at the heart of programme development and it is the reason, ultimately, for the curricular process.

SUMMARY

EVALUATION CHECK-LIST

Can you:

- write aims for a course/training programme?
- state objectives related to those aims?
- distinguish between general and specific objectives?
- distinguish between process and product objectives?
- identify and use appropriate design principles?
- identify and choose appropriate strategies for implementation?
- say what is meant by evaluation?
- design and use an evaluation strategy for your course/training programme?

SIGNPOSTS

Links to other elements include the following:

SIGNPOST
The Introductory Element – Section 3

SIGNPOST
Element 3. Devising Individual Learning Programmes section on identifying and analysing learner needs

SIGNPOST
Element 5. Training/Teaching and Learning Strategies – task analysis.

SIGNPOST
Element 8. Guidance and Support

SIGNPOST
Element 4. Assessment and Review

SIGNPOST
Element 6. Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials

SIGNPOST
User Guide

3

LEARNING SUPPORT

DEVISING INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PROGRAMMES

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INTRODUCTION

All learners have individual needs, interests and abilities which affect their performance. It is important to identify the needs in order to plan and provide appropriate education/training. This is especially the case for learners with special educational/training needs. They may often require additional support and/or individual provision.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Am I treating the learner as an individual?
- Do I understand what learner-centredness means?
- Do I understand the relationship between:
  a) learner-centredness
  b) individual learning programmes?
- Have I the knowledge and techniques to recognise individual needs?
- Can I respond to individual needs?
- Can I produce an individual learning programme?

AIMS

- To develop an understanding of individual learning needs.
- To examine the implications of individual needs in planning appropriate programmes to meet them.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this element you should be able to:

- describe a learner-centred approach;
- describe what an individual learning programme is for;
- outline the steps in devising an individual learning programme;
- collect and interpret information in order to devise an individual programme plan;
- describe ways of identifying special education/training needs;
- produce a format for identifying needs;
- describe appropriate ways of recording information;
- list a range of aspects of the course/training programme which may be modified;
- prepare provisional programme plans;
- define negotiation;
- involve the learner in the production of the plan, through negotiation;
- describe the contracting process and policy in your establishment;
- draw up appropriate contracts;
- monitor progress in a positive way, encouraging the learners to be actively involved;
- identify any skills you need to develop in order to devise effective individual learning programmes;
- devise a personal action plan to achieve this development;
- devise individual programmes suitable for learners with special needs.

1. INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PROGRAMMES

RATIONALE

Why should you develop individual learning programmes?
What makes them particularly useful for learners with special education or training needs?

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PROGRAMMES

Individual learning programmes:

- Allow you to cater for the variety of interests and needs that learners bring with them.
- Allow the learners to adopt the style that suits them best. They can use materials and resources which are individually tailored. Furthermore, they can progress at their own pace and work at their own level.
- Require the teacher or trainer to involve actively the learner in planning and delivery. The teacher's role is one of negotiator, offering support and guidance to help the learner actively to take responsiblility for his or her own learning.
- Are dependent on the relationship between the learner and teacher. It is crucial in this process. It makes demands on both parties, particularly of interpersonal communication skills such as listening, negotiating and contracting.
- Require listening, negotiation and contracting. But these activities do not need to take place on a one-to-one basis. Guidance and support may be offered individually, but much of it will take place in a group setting.
- Require collaborative working with colleagues in planning and delivery.

A LEARNER-CENTRED APPROACH

Individual learning programmes are a means by which a learner-centred approach can be implemented.

They have particular value for learners with special educational/training needs, because they can focus on the special, *extra* support required to make learning effective.

Ideally any planning will take into account the individual differences, needs and interests of the learners. However, in order to structure appropriate learning opportunities for learners with special needs, individual planning is *essential*.

EXERCISE 1. WHAT DOES LEARNER-CENTREDNESS MEAN?

Individual activity

This activity will help you consider how far you use a learner-centred approach in your work.

Try your hand at the following check-list.

CHECK-LIST

Do you give learners the opportunity to:	Always	often	sometimes	never
• negotiate their own programme?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• set their own learning objectives?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• assess their own work?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• have a break when they need it?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• organise their own club?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• work in pairs if they choose?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• work independently?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• question the relevance of their work?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• assess your skills?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• discuss your organisation?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Do you:				
• explain criteria you use when assessing?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• prefer to use no graded marking system?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Talk to your learners individually about their progress?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• record attainment using a profile?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• encourage learners to keep a diary or log?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• cater for mixed abilities on an individual basis?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• encourage learners to help each other?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• undertake team teaching/training, working co-operatively, alongside other staff?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• produce integrated tasks with other staff?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• liaise with other staff on learner progress?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• alter the learning setting to suit the method you use?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• know all the learners' names?	☐	☐	☐	☐
• spend time talking about their lives and interests?	☐	☐	☐	☐

How did you get on?

If most of your ticks were in the 'always' or 'often' boxes then you are probably adopting a learner-centred approach.

From these questions you should have some idea of the activities and processes which are typically associated with learner-centred approaches.

It is not appropriate to define them any further here. If you wish to explore the meaning further, the references at the end of this element will help you to do so.

The next step is to consider the skills necessary to devise and implement individual learning programmes.

WHAT IS AN INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PROGRAMME?

- A formalised plan negotiated between the learner and teacher which enables individual learners with special needs to develop their knowledge and skills to meet their specific goals.
- A specific plan to enable the learner with special needs to gain access to, participate in, and benefit from, an overall curriculum/training programme.

WHAT IS IT FOR?

The development in the learner of:

- freedom of choice
- self-responsibility
- self-motivation
- self-discipline
- self-application
- self-organisation
- critical thinking
- the ability to communicate
- self-reliance
- independence

Ultimately, to develop the ability to use these skills within the context of living and working within the community.

It should be noted that these skills are often lacking in learners with special needs, particularly those with learning difficulties.

DEVISING INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMMES

Individual learning programmes:

- should be devised on the basis of an understanding of the precise needs, learning style (the way in which the person learns best), strengths and interests of the learner;
- specify the objectives and goals for the learner and the modifications based on individual learning needs;
- mean you must continuously monitor the learning process and make appropriate changes to the plan as required by the learner's growth and development;
- should *actively* involve the learner in devising the programme through a process of negotiation.

EXERCISE 2. NEGOTIATION

Individual activity

Stress has been placed on the need to involve the learner actively in devising an individual programme. This involves negotiation.

This exercise will help you to consider at this early stage the extent to which you can negotiate with learners and to identify which areas are open to negotiation and which are not. We will be returning to the negotiation process later in this element.

Tick the items in the list below, which you feel allow for negotiation. Put a cross beside those where no negotiation is possible.

- learning (or training) needs
- appropriate learning strategies
- learning outcomes
- assessment procedures
- individual timetables
- changes in direction or in programme
- learning agendas for learners

Whole group activity

Consider the outcomes as a whole group.

An outline for a discussion of the issue is given below.

DISCUSSION SHEET

You will probably have ticked most of the items noted above although learning outcomes may not be negotiable.

Learning needs

If teaching/training is to be based on individual plans, it is important for you to establish the learner's needs and for both of you to discuss them.

Appropriate learning strategies

On the basis of this discussion, it is possible to move on to the issue of suitable learning strategies. For example, recorded information, computer programs or text books may be used to reach a learning outcome.

Learning outcomes

These are not negotiable in many cases, often because they are predetermined by the funding agency. In some cases, where the outcomes are not predetermined, for example in non-certificated or non-examination work, negotiation may be possible.

Assessment outcomes

There is a limit to the negotiation possible in the area of assessment. However, some variation in procedures for assessment is acceptable. In some cases it is possible to use more than one method, such as written answers, multiple choice or use of a computer program or production of an article.

Individual timetables

This may well be possible. Not all courses or training programmes require linear progression. (This package, for example, is designed so that you can determine your own route through the material, at your own pace). You can draw up a timetable to take account of variations in pace.

Changes in direction or in programmes

Changes in direction or reshaping of the programme should be negotiated if the content is inappropriate or the outcomes are unrealistic for the learner.

Learning agendas for learners

Individual learning programmes require frequent monitoring to ensure that the intentions of both you and the learner can be made clear. The next steps in the course/training programme can then be negotiated.

2. STEPS IN DEVISING AN INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMME

Step 1 Collect and interpret information about the learner.
Step 2 Consider the course/training programmes, aims and objectives in the light of the learner's characteristics, interests and needs.
Step 3 Prepare a provisional plan in co-operation with all others who can give relevant information.
Step 4 Discuss the plan with the learner. Negotiate, then agree on a final plan and make a contract to meet it.
Step 5 Monitor progress. Make any necessary modifications to the plan through negotiation.

These steps form a cycle which will not be carried out only once, but which will need to be repeated throughout the course/training programme.

It will be helpful to look at these steps in detail:

STEP 1. COLLECTION AND INTERPRETATION OF INFORMATION

What are the main sources of information?

- the learner: application forms, interviews
- previous records
- previous teachers: information from school leavers' reviews and initial training in YTS
- parents/carers
- special staff

What kinds of information will it be useful to collect?

SIGNPOST

In Element 4, **Assessment and Review**, there is a detailed consideration of sources of information and initial assessment.

● ● ● EXERCISE 3. INFORMATION GATHERING

Small group activity

This activity will help you to identify the information necessary for an understanding of the learner's current knowledge, skills and aptitudes. Guard against a simple listing of what the learners *cannot* do, and worse still devising a programme comprised largely, or exclusively, of things the learner cannot do.

Form small groups.

Make a list of the kinds of information you need.

You may find it useful to use the following headings:

Current abilities
e.g. literacy level, courses taken

Interests
e.g. vocational

Physical skills
e.g. manipulative skills

Personal effectiveness/life skills
e.g. what will be the likely employment or life style of the learner?

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Each group should report back on one of the four areas suggested. Additions may be made from the other groups to form a composite list.

The facilitator should ensure that the lists developed are *not* a plan for the course content.

HOW WILL YOU COLLECT THIS INFORMATION?

SIGNPOST

You will have been introduced to this in section 1 of the **Introductory Element**. It may be useful to have another look at this section.

Element 4, **Assessment and Review**, considers this in detail in the initial assessment section. You may which to work through the section now.

The learners will provide you with much of the information. It is valuable both to talk to the learners and observe them working. In order to do this you will need to devise appropriate activities to enable you to observe performance and discuss it with the learner.

You will need to look at any available records and arrange to talk to other people as appropriate.

HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY SPECIAL EDUCATION/TRAINING NEEDS?

Analysing needs

We have stressed the need for actively involving the learner in this process. One way of doing this, of identifying and analysing needs, parallels that already used in this pack. It was employed in order to help you to assess staff needs and was included in the user guide.

Here are some examples of how to do this.

The process involves exploring the learners' needs with them.

Ask the learners.

Using a simple proforma, you can ask the learners to identify:

- what they want to do, e.g. I would like to:
  - read
  - develop skills in x, y, z
  - use a calculator
- what they can do, e.g. I find the following:

	easy			difficult
	1	2	3	4
answering the telephone	×			
estimating the cost of goods			×	

This information forms a basis, but needs to be supplemented by observation of performance. By setting tasks, you can judge aspects of performance such as literacy skills, manual dexterity, ability to concentrate, distractibility. From this you can derive a profile of the current range of abilities, which gives you a basis for negotiating the learning programme.

WHEN IDENTIFYING SPECIAL EDUCATION/TRAINING NEEDS, WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR?

What obvious visual clues indicate possible special needs?

Examples include:

- use of wheelchair
- hearing aid
- sitting very close to a vdu screen

What other examples can you think of?

There are also more subtle clues which you need to pick up. This requires you to be sensitive and alert.

Examples include:

Relationships

- Does the learner interact successfully with others?
- Does he/she prefer to work alone?
- Does the learner tend to disrupt the activities of the group?

- Is the learner hostile, defensive, overtly aggressive or withdrawn? (This response may result from having been the butt of insulting remarks.)

Communicating

- Does the learner avoid volunteering?
- Does she/he work more slowly than others?
- Does she/he have problems with reading and writing?
- Does the learner often ask to have things explained?
- Does she/he strain to hear what you are saying?

Learning

- How does the learner approach tasks?
- If she/he has difficulties, *where* does the difficulty occur:
  - with reading the instructions?
  - with understanding instructions?
  - with translating the instructions into activity?
- How does the learner cope with difficulty?
  - Does he/she give up?
  - Does he/she persevere?
  - Is he/she easily distracted?
  - Does he/she try to overcome the difficulty alone?
  - Does he/she enlist the help of others?
- If the task involves a physical skill:
  - Does the learner show dexterity?
  - Does the learner appear clumsy?
  - How quickly is the task completed?
  - How accurately is the task completed?

● ● ● EXERCISE 4. OBSERVATION CHECK-LIST

Small group activity

This activity will help you to formulate an observation check-list for use in your workplace.

Form small groups. It will be easier if you work in groups concerned with the same subject or teaching/training programme area.

Devise an observation check-list relevant to your work, using the questions given above and any others which are appropriate to your learners.

● ● ● EXERCISE 5. RECORDING INFORMATION

Small group activity

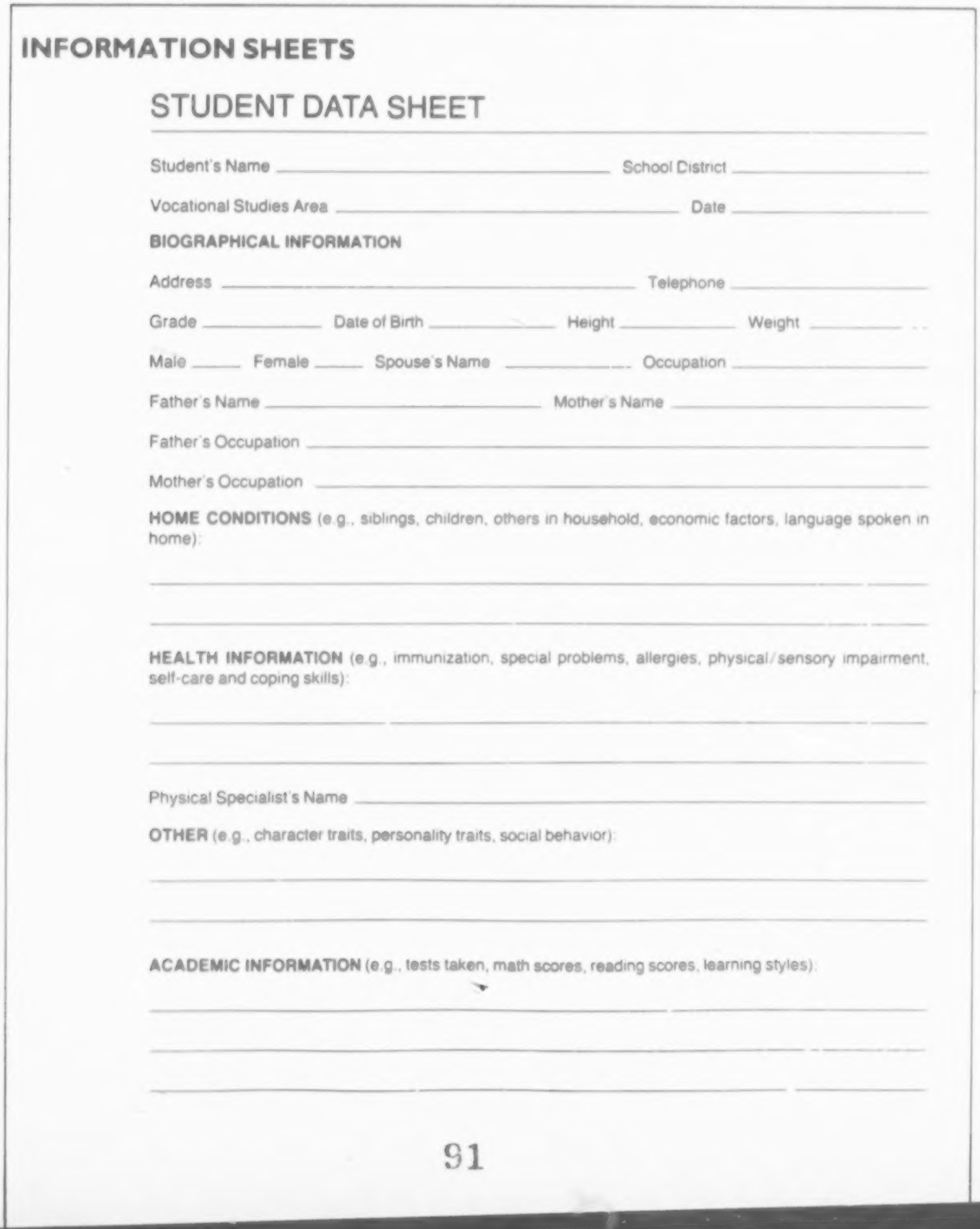
How will you record this information so that it provides a useful working document for the next step?

This activity enables you to consider the best ways of recording the information you have obtained from various sources.

Guidelines for facilitators

You will need some examples of different formats for recording information and on the next pages you will find some which you may wish to use. It should be stressed that these are *not necessarily* representative of good practice. You may choose to use your own examples which are more relevant to your work or which would provide you with an appropriate basis for development.

Methods	Form small groups. 1. Examine each information sheet *critically*. What faults does it have? 2. Devise an information sheet which will suit your particular learners. You should now have a useful tool for step 2.
●●●● *Whole group activity*	Feed back the results of each group's discussions. Devise a list of features which should be *avoided*. Examine the information sheets devised by each group. You may wish to revise your existing recording procedures in the light of this activity.



INFORMATION SHEETS

STUDENT DATA SHEET

Student's Name ____________ School District ____________

Vocational Studies Area ____________ Date ____________

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Address ____________ Telephone ____________

Grade ______ Date of Birth ______ Height ______ Weight ______

Male ____ Female ____ Spouse's Name ______ Occupation ______

Father's Name ____________ Mother's Name ____________

Father's Occupation ____________

Mother's Occupation ____________

HOME CONDITIONS (e.g., siblings, children, others in household, economic factors, language spoken in home):

HEALTH INFORMATION (e.g., immunization, special problems, allergies, physical/sensory impairment, self-care and coping skills):

Physical Specialist's Name ____________

OTHER (e.g., character traits, personality traits, social behavior):

ACADEMIC INFORMATION (e.g., tests taken, math scores, reading scores, learning styles):

EXTRACT FROM 'PROFILE STATEMENTS'

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

	Year:	Grade:	Year:	Grade.
	1st Semester	2nd Semester	1st Semester	2nd Semester
Absences:				
Tardies:				

Remarks:

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION (e.g., employment history, vocational interests, hobbies, special interests, special vocational talents, skills, work preference, work habits/attitudes):

Remarks:

SPECIAL SERVICES:

(From Bell, *Identify and Diagnose Exceptional Students*, AAVIM, 1984)

Name
Parents or Guardians
Tutor

KEY
✓ – Can do
P – Priority to work on
O – Wait
– – Not applicable

	Students	Parent(s)	Tutor
COMMUNICATION			
1. *Talking to people*			
1.1 Use sign language if I need to			
1.2 Speak clearly			
1.3 Talk so that others can understand me			
1.4 Talk and listen to other people			
1.5 Follow instructions and requests that I see or hear			
1.6 Tell others how I feel, what I need and what I think			
1.7 Be able to explain things			
1.8 Understand words used for doing different jobs such as woodwork or cooking			
1.9 Know what to do at an interview			
1.10 Use private and public telephones to phone friends and to make emergency calls			
2. *Reading and writing*			
2.1 Like looking at books and magazines, drawing, colouring and matching shapes			
2.2 Get help if I cannot read or write something			
2.3 Recognise my name and address			
2.4 Be able to read symbols and important words that I see in the community			
2.5 Follow drawn instructions			
2.6 Read simple pieces of writing for information			
2.7 Read newspapers, magazines and books to enjoy and get information			
2.8 Write letters that others can read			
2.9 Write my name, address and signature			
2.10 Fill in simple forms and write lists and messages to other people			
2.11 Write about anything I want to			
SOCIAL SKILLS			
3. *About myself*			
3.1 Know the names of parts of my body			
3.2 Know the difference between child, teenager, adult and old person			
3.3 Know what happens as the body changes			
3.4 Know the differences between men and women			
3.5 Say my name, age, address, phone number, religion, nationality, height and weight			
3.6 Know what I am good at and not so good at, and say what I think about things			

(From *New Directions*, FEU, 1988)

STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET

Learner's name ______________________ Course ____________

YTS supervisor/individual tutor ______________

Social worker ______________________ Doctor ____________

Telephone number ____________________ Telephone ____________

Starting date ______________ Finishing date ______________

INFORMATION FROM THE LEARNERS GAINED BY OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION

Physical skills

Manual dexterity

Body co-ordination: walking, balance, etc.

Declared physical disabilities: If the learner is unwilling to declare her or his disability (and there is no other evidence to the contrary), we have to assume she or he is physically able as there will be no allowance made for her/him in the living and working community.

Personal effectiveness

Communication: Can the student be understood? With whom is the student most confident? Can she or he talk in a group?

Travel: Can the student:

- travel by bus/train?
- read a timetable?
- ask for information?
- travel on his/her own?

Money management: Can the student manage her/his weekly pay? Can he or she use a bank/PO/building society account? Does the student understand credit cards? Can he or she use a cash point?

Learning skills

Reading: Instructions, newspapers, trade names, etc.

Writing: Application forms; records, letters for information.

Numeracy: On buses, tell the time, basic arithmetic, measurement.

Computer skills: Use drill and practice programs, simulations, databases and word processing programs.

How does the student learn? In what situation does the learner learn the most.

Peer group: – Discussion
– Practical skills

Individual: – Reading/writing
– Following instructions

One to one: – Tutoring

Learner's interests

How does he or she spend free time?

Expand on each item, e.g.:
What does the student watch on the television?
Which music does the student like?
What books/magazines/comics does the student read?

School record

Which secondary school(s) did the student attend?
Useful comments from schools
Useful comments from the careers service

STEP 2. CONSIDER THE COURSE/TRAINING PROGRAMME AIMS AND OBJECTIVES IN RELATION TO LEARNER CHARACTERISTICS, NEEDS AND INTERESTS

This is the starting point for considering the individual modifications to make the programme appropriate to the learner.

WHAT ASPECTS OF YOUR COURSE/TRAINING PROGRAMME MIGHT YOU CONSIDER MODIFYING IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS?

The following list gives some clues:

- skills/content
- sequence
- timetabling
- learning activities/teaching methods
- learning resources
- managing the setting
- assessment procedures

Here are some examples related to each of these.

Skills

A learner with poor numeracy skills taking an office skills programme might concentrate on typing, filing and answering the telephone. Other skills such as bookkeeping may be inappropriate to the learner. Thus for such a learner *omission of skills* is required.

A learner who has a poor memory may benefit from a small-step approach in say the preparation of food (e.g. weighing, measuring, etc.). In this case the learner requires the *addition* of steps in order to develop skills.

Sequence

You may normally use a chronological order (e.g. first you . . . then you . . .). A learner who has difficulty in making such connections may benefit from starting with the most familiar skills. In other words you proceed from the simple to the complex, or from the known to the unknown.

A learner who has a history of failure will benefit from simple tasks which enable her or him to succeed. This influences self-image and motivation.

A group of learners presenting different needs can be encompassed in a group setting by using a variety of techniques suiting a cross-section of needs. Self-contained learning packages are also of value.

Timetabling

You may need to allow extra time for mastering new skills or material for some learners. Allow for fatigue.

Learning activities/ teaching methods

An alternative method may be necessary to cover the content of a field trip wh[illegible] a wheelchair user is unable to attend.

A learner who finds it hard to concentrate on her or his own work and is easily diverted from the task, may benefit from having work broken into small steps, at the end of which she or he receives reinforcement and reminders of what should be done next.

Learning resources

A learner who is a wheelchair user may require the height of a working surface to be adjusted.

A learner who has hearing impairment may need to be provided with a transcript of video or audio tapes watched by the group.

A learner with learning difficulties will require age-appropriate materials. This may mean that you need to seek out specially adopted materials, or in many instances adopt existing material/produce your own.

A learner who is visually impaired would benefit from having reading materials such as worksheets and hand-outs in large print.

A learner may require an interpreter for activities involving discussion.

A whole range of technical aids is available commercially, but simple adaptations can be made by use of the imagination.

Managing the setting

Placing slower learners with faster learners allows some mutual support and exchange to take place, enhancing the learning for all participants.

Setting up a variety of activities prevents those with short attention spans from becoming bored.

Assessment procedures

Written pen and pencil type tests or evaluation sheets may be inappropriate for some learners.

Discussion or question and answer assessments may be problematic for learners with speech difficulties.

● ● ●

Small group activity

EXERCISE 6. MODIFICATIONS TO MEET INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

This activity will help you to consider how you might modify your course/training programme to cater for the special education/training needs of individuals.

Form small groups

1. On the next pages you will find extracts from lists of knowledge/skills required for various jobs, and vocational or core skills.

   Make a short list of knowledge/skills relevant to your own course/training programme.
2. You will need the case-studies: Chris, Gladstone, Ronke, Michael and Ivan (Characters 2,6,7,8 and 10 located in the Resources Section).

   For each learner, consider the lists of knowledge/skills needed to do a job (overleaf), and indicate where special arrangements would facilitate learning.

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Each group should feed back their conclusions.

INFORMATION SHEET 1

MODIFICATIONS SUPPORTING INFORMATION (1)

Food service worker

1. Deep-fat fry prepared foods.
2. Make salads.
3. Grill meats and sandwiches on counter grill.
4. Prepare milk shakes and sundaes using portion control and correct ingredients.
5. Serve appropriate food portions on plates for customers.

Childcare worker.

1. Help children to feed themselves.
2. Guide children in dressing themselves.
3. Direct children in organised play by teaching them how to play games, motivating their participation in the group, acting as referee and so on.
4. Prepare meals and snacks for young children.
5. Supervise young children during outdoor activities (e.g. playground, field trips, walks).

Merchandising

1. Check and order merchandise.
2. Arrange sales displays.
3. Demonstrate merchandise to customers.

4. Correct errors made on register.

Carpenter

1. Shape materials to prescribed measurements using saws, chisels and planes.
2. Study blueprints, sketches or building plans for information on required materials and dimensions of structure to be fabricated.
3. Verify trueness of structure with plumb bob and carpenter's level.

INFORMATION SHEET 2

MODIFICATIONS SUPPORTING INFORMATION (2)

(from *Core Skills in YTS Pt. 1* MSC, 1984)

Communication

6. Finding out information and interpreting instructions:
   - Find out information by speaking to other people.
   - Find out information from written sources.
   - Find out information by observing.
   - Interpret spoken instructions.
   - Interpret written instructions.
   - Find out the needs of other people in the workplace.
   - Find out the facts about things that have gone wrong.
   - Find out the needs of customers and clients.

Problem solving

10. Decision making: choosing between alternatives:
    - Decide what action is required.
    - Decide between alternative courses of action.
    - Decide how to make the best of an awkward situation.
    - Decide on a correct response when accidents and emergencies occur.

STEP 3. PREPARE A PROVISIONAL PLAN IN CO-OPERATION WITH ALL OTHERS WHO CAN GIVE RELEVANT INFORMATION

This is a relatively straightforward exercise, based on the information gathered from the first two steps.

You need to:

- establish the overall aims for the programme;
- derive specific objectives to meet those aims;
- identify the nature and use of appropriate support.

● ● ● EXERCISE 7. PREPARING A PROVISIONAL PLAN

Small group activity

This activity will enable you to prepare or adapt an individual programme plan.

Devise an individual programme plan to suit a learner on your course/training programme, or use one of the central characters from the previous activity.

STEP 4. DISCUSS THE PLAN WITH THE LEARNER. NEGOTIATE, THEN AGREE ON A FINAL PLAN AND MAKE A CONTRACT TO MEET IT

The central notion of this approach is that it is learner centred. There is no point in devising and imposing a plan on the learner; it must be developed and agreed by both the learner and the teacher, through a process of negotiation.

What is negotiation?

- a process involving two sides co-operating in a defined context;
- a means by which expectation and attitudes can be discussed;
- a way of making concessions and achieving agreement, and a commitment to a set of outcomes.

Who negotiates?

The learner must be able to make a contribution.

In order to do so, she or he will need to have the appropriate skills. You may need to structure opportunities for developing these skills.

The teacher must be willing and able to negotiate.

What skills are needed to negotiate?

There are three main elements:

1. The identification and communication of needs.
2. The making of choices.
3. The acceptance of the consequences of making decisions.

● ● ●

EXERCISE 8. NEGOTIATION ROLE-PLAY

Small group activity

This activity enables you to consider the negotiation process and offers you an opportunity to practice your skills.

Form groups of three.

1. Either: Choose a learner you know and an existing individual programme plan.

   Or: Select one of the case-study characters (from the Resources Section) and the programme plan devised in Exercise 7.
2. Allocate roles. Identify one person as the learner, one person as the teacher or trainer, and the third person to observe and feed back.
3. The 'learner' and 'teacher/trainer' should spend a short time preparing and then, in role, should attempt to negotiate the programme plan.

   The observer should watch and use the following questions to monitor the process:
   - Is each person allowed to state his/her case?
   - Does each person listen to the other case?
   - Are concessions made on both sides?
   - Do they come to a shared understanding and final agreement? If not, why not?
4. Repeat the stages above changing roles twice so you all have an opportunity to try each role. You may choose to change the learner for each role-play.

SIGNPOST

Information on role plays will be found in section 3 of Element 5, **Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies**.

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Discuss the outcomes from each group and identify those factors which enable the negotiation process.

Draw up a list of enabling factors.

WHAT IS CONTRACTING?

The formal agreement by both learner and teacher to a plan to achieve specified outcomes.

For contracting to work, the contract must be clear, simple and covering a few tasks only.

A reward should be identified. (This could be simply praise, or special responsibilities.)

The reward should be clearly defined and should be valued by the learner.

The relationship between task and reward should be clear.

The contract is improved if all parties sign and have copies of the clearly written or typed statement.

The first reward must always be obtainable.

● ● EXERCISE 9. DEVISING A CONTRACT

Activity in pairs

This activity enables you to consider how to draw up a contract.

This activity may take the form of a role-play or discussion.

1. Choose a learner known to you, who has a clearly defined need or problem which could respond to a contract, e.g. arriving on time, completing tasks, paying attention to the job.
2. Identify the behaviour which you both agree needs to be changed. You may find that there are a number of areas which you wish to work on but you will need to select only one or two items to start with. As these are achieved, you can move on to new areas.
3. Identify appropriate rewards.
4. Formulate this as a statement of the task/action to be performed. State the number of times it should be performed successfully in order to obtain the reward.
5. Write the contract. Ensure that all the parties who will be involved in the contract are involved in drawing it up. In practice you will both need to sign the contract and to monitor and discuss progress. This will lead to adjustments, as appropriate.

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Your establishment may have a policy on the negotiation and contracting process. Discuss the outcomes of the pairs activity, in relation to this policy.

If your establishment does not have a policy, you should draw up guidelines for using contracts.

STEP 5. MONITOR PROGRESS. MAKE ANY NECESSARY MODIFICATIONS TO THE PLAN THROUGH NEGOTIATION

The process of monitoring and negotiating is ongoing throughout the programme. It must ensure that the learner has an opportunity to express his/her views.

It allows you to:

- plan a balanced programme;
- ensure steady progression;
- provide for changes of direction.

In order to provide genuinely learner-centred learning, your negotiation of a programme must include regular monitoring of each learner's progress. The aim of this approach is to help the learner to develop self-reliance and independence in the learning process. Monitoring and reviewing progress may take place in a number of ways but you will be doing this informally, throughout the teaching/training. A small group or course team may have a system of regular meetings in order to do this, while larger groups may come together to review progress at predetermined stages as, for example, in YTS.

The process of monitoring should:

- involve the learners in their own learning;
- enable them to reflect on their experience;
- encourage them to see the application and transferability of their skills;
- enable progression, setting new goals and targets.

HOW DOES THIS WORK IN PRACTICE?

Monitoring and reviewing can take place at any stage during the programme. Here we look at some examples of its use at the stages listed below:

- at entry
- during the programme
- at the end

Some of the issues which may be raised *at entry*:

- The learner or parent may have unrealistic expectations, (for all learners, including those with special education/training needs, these may be too high or too low).
- The learner may not want the responsibility of making choices.
- The learner, or the employer, might not see the value of some parts of the programme.
- The employer may want content specific only to one occupation.
- The parent may be concerned about possible risks for the learner, e.g. working with machinery or going out alone.
- The staff member may want to restrict the learner to one area of content.
- The staff member may be concerned about safety with a disabled learner.

At this stage you are establishing an appropriate footing for the programme. Misunderstandings here can lead to much greater problems later on. It may involve explaining the purpose and value of some parts of the programme, and reconciling the needs and expectations of everybody involved.

During the programme:

SIGNPOST

The Element 8, **Guidance and Support,** deals with the development of these skills in detail.

Much of the monitoring process occurs informally. It involves providing feedback to the learner in a way which enables her or him to reflect on performance and suggest ways of improving it.

For example:

> A learner using a word processor finds the entire script is underlined. The teacher or trainer asks, 'Why do you think that has happened? How can you avoid it happening again?'
>
> A visually impaired learner is measuring wood and marking it for cutting out. The teacher or trainer might ask: 'How can you make marks which you can follow?' You could suggest: 'How can you produce marks you can feel?'

Other situations require a more structured approach, possibly on an individual basis. The sort of skills you require include:

- building a trusting relationship;
- giving guidance and support;
- identifying strengths and weaknesses;
- giving and receiving feedback.

● ● ● EXERCISE 10. MONITORING PROGRESS

Small group activity

This activity helps you to consider how you can monitor and discuss progress in a way which is positive and encourages the learner to be self-reliant rather than dependent on you for solutions.

Form small groups.

What approach would you adopt in monitoring and discussing progress?

Consider these suggestions:

Stage 1 – Identify what has been done well. This gives positive feedback and identifies strengths and achievements.

Stage 2 – Ask what is wrong and why. This involves the learner in his/her own review process.

Stage 3 – Ask what could be done to overcome the problem. This requires the learner to reflect on what she or he has done and learnt. You may need to add further supporting comments to prompt thinking.

Stage 4 – Agree on a new target which can be added to the individual programme plan. This ensures that the individual programme plan is a 'rolling' programme.

Now read through these examples.

(A) A learner with specific learning disabilities, who has extreme difficulty in reading even labels, has cooked a batch of fruit scones. They are well risen and the fruit is well distributed, but she or he has used salt instead of sugar.

(B) A learner who has found difficulty in working with others has started to contribute in group work. However, she/he still has problems in expressing ideas and getting them over to the group.

SIGNPOST

This is detailed in Element 4, **Assessment and Review.**

Now discuss the following with regard to both A and B

You want to encourage the learner to think about and monitor his or her own progress rather than relying on you for feedback and solutions.

How would you do this?
Make a note of your suggestions.

At the end

A final review involves helping the learner to recognise what has been achieved. It provides the basis for planning where to go next.

● EXERCISE 11. SUMMARY ACTIVITY

Individual activity

This exercise is designed to enable you to apply all of these steps in practice. You will appreciate that it cannot be completed in one go. You will need to carry it out over a period of time. You may find it useful to discuss progress on a regular basis.

Select a learner on your course/training programme.

Follow the steps outlined, up to and including step 3.

Draw up an individual programme plan.

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Discuss each of the individual programme plans drawn up. If the group is large you may prefer to divide into two groups.

Each member should carry out step 4 with the learner.

You should arrange a follow-up session to discuss the outcomes.

The questions below will help you with this discussion.

- Is the learner the centre of that programme?
- Is the learner taking responsibility for learning?

- Have you used the expertise and knowledge of other agencies?
- Have you included other people in the team concerned with making provision for the individual learners?
- Have the programmes met the needs of individual learners?
- Is the programme realistic?
- Are you aware of the constraints of the programme?
- Have you tried to overcome these constraints?
- Is the programme clear? Can it be easily understood by the learner?
- Have you consulted the learner in devising the programme?
- Has the learner agreed to the programme?

SUMMARY

EVALUATION CHECK-LIST

Can you:

- describe a learner-centred approach?
- describe what an individual learning programme is for?
- outline the steps in devising an individual learning programme?
- collect and interpret information in order to devise an individual programme plan?
- describe ways of identifying special education/training needs?
- produce a format for identifying needs?
- describe appropriate ways of recording information?
- list a range of aspects of the course/training programme which may be modified?
- prepare provisional programme plans?
- define negotiation?
- involve the learner in the production of the plan, through negotiation?
- describe the contracting process and policy in your establishment?
- draw up appropriate contracts?
- monitor progress in a positive way, encouraging the learners to be actively involved?
- identify any skills you need to develop in order to devise effective individual learning programmes?
- devise a personal action plan to achieve this development?

SIGNPOSTS

Links to other elements include the following:

SIGNPOST

In Element 4, **Assessment and Review**, you will find a detailed consideration of sources of information and initial assessment.

SIGNPOST

Information on role- plays will be found in Section 3 of Element 5, **Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies.**

SIGNPOST

Introductory Element, Section 1.

SIGNPOST

Element 8, **Guidance and Support**, deals with the development of skills of guidance and support.

4

LEARNING SUPPORT

ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW

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INTRODUCTION

Assessment is a central feature and an integral part of the education or training process. It can determine admission to courses, it provides feedback on progress, and may lead trainers or teachers to modify their approaches. Assessment may provide a summative statement of achievement which in turn may suggest the next steps in the provision of education or training.

Access to courses is usually based on an initial assessment of the learner's ability. The same admission criteria should apply to all applicants. Judgements about the special needs of some learners should not deny access, but should lead to a specification of the extra support or provision which will be necessary to enable them to participate. Access is then improved by the whole range of support facilities, ranging from modified teaching or training methods and content, or extra guidance sessions, to the provision of special aids such as magnifiers or hearing loops. Access is not limited to the provision of ramps! The principles of assessment are the same for all learners, but the techniques used will require adaptation to meet individual special needs.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What is assessment?
- What use is it?
- Why do it?
- How?
- When should we assess?
- What are the similarities and differences in assessing people with special needs?

AIMS

- To enhance knowledge and understanding of assessment.
- To explore the application of assessment techniques for learners with special needs.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this element you should be able to:

- use assessment procedures which enable all potential learners to gain access by specifying their special needs and how provision for them will be made;
- demonstrate an understanding of the purposes of assessment in general and in relation to special needs;
- identify and use appropriate sources to make an initial assessment of learning needs;
- select and use appropriate assessment techniques;
- outline and apply an action plan for assessment;
- develop a self-assessment procedure;
- consider the appropriateness of records of achievement to meet special needs;
- review the awards made by examining and validating bodies in relation to special needs and suggest modifications as appropriate;
- make final statements of learner achievements.

EXERCISES

Exercise 1. Pre-admission information
Exercise 2. Reports
Exercise 3. Application form
Exercise 4. Interviewing
Exercise 5. Initial information
Exercise 6. Norm- and criterion-referenced assessment
Exercise 7. Validity
Exercise 8. Assessment methods

Exercise 9. Choosing the method
Exercise 10. Methods to suit individuals
Exercise 11. Applying an action plan for assessment
Exercise 12. Self-assessment
Exercise 13. Records of achievement
Exercise 14. Qualifications and examination procedures
Exercise 15. Modifying examination procedures
Exercise 16. Policy statements and regulations

ASSESSMENT

KEY QUESTIONS

What is assessment?	It is a process designed to obtain accurate information about learners' performance, potential and attainments, using a wide variety of methods. It is also an integral part of the planning and implementation of a curriculum/training programme.
What use is it?	• It enables staff to direct potential learners to appropriate courses/training programmes. • It gives feedback to learners and staff about progress throughout the course/training programme. • It can provide a lasting record of information about the achievements of learners and their progress during the course/training programme. • It aids evaluation of the overall course/training programme.
Why do it?	• To give information to learners about their progress. • To give staff information about learners' progress. • To enable staff to evaluate the effectiveness of their courses/training programmes. • Likewise to enable learners to evaluate the programmes.
How?	• By actively involving learners. • By selecting an appropriate method which is norm-referenced or criterion-referenced. • By using methods which are reliable and valid.
When?	• Initially, to establish the starting points for learning and teaching/training (formative assessment) throughout the course/training programme. • Frequently, to obtain regular feedback for learners and tutor/trainers. • As an integral part of the learning process in which learners are encouraged to assess their own progress. • At the end of the course/training programme to provide a statement of achievement and progress.

ASSESSING THE PROGRESS OF LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION/TRAINING NEEDS

What are the similarities in assessment for any learner?	• The **purpose** is the same; you want to find out about the learner's achievements and progress. • The **processes** of assessment are the same for any group of individuals. • Assessment and review will be carried out on the same occasions; that is, on entry, to find out current performance level, continuously throughout the programme to determine progress, and at the end to provide a record of achievement and to suggest the next steps. • The standards or criteria by which you measure performance are the same. The performance tasks may be fewer or different, but the yardstick or standard will remain constant.
What are the differences for learners with special educational/training needs?	• The techniques you use and the tasks set to assess learners normally may be inappropriate for some learners with special educational/training needs. For example a video or audio recording of performance might be more appropriate than a written response. Observation of performance may be more appropriate than discussion or oral questioning for people with communication difficulties.

- The frequency of assessment may be greater. Feedback about progress is essential to both learner and tutor or trainer. For some learners with special needs, progress may be slower. Frequent assessment and feedback can help in identifying and tackling problems as soon as they arise, and help in giving a suitable gradation of tasks.
- Some learners with special needs will have low self-esteem and little self-confidence, often arising from previous lack of success. It is vital for them to see their own progress, thereby giving a sense of accomplishment and providing motivation. Frequent assessment will identify progress and help improve self-image.
- Use a system of recording progress which gives an accurate picture of the learner's achievements. Tasks may need to be broken down into constituent steps or elements of competence to reveal progress. The frequency of assessment affects the working procedures and the size of the steps used in the individual learning/training programme.

PRE-ADMISSION ASSESSMENT

The first hurdle that learners with special needs face is joining the course/training programme. In some cases, individuals are denied access because staff fail to realise how needs may be met appropriately.

You may not, as a teacher or trainer, be directly involved in the pre-admission procedure, but it is important that you know about the processes involved. In YTS, pre-placement assessment will often be undertaken by the careers service, and in some cases young people will have undertaken Initial Training.

The sources of information available to the staff making the pre-admission assessment will include:

- reports;
- application forms;
- interviews;
- information from school leavers' reviews and Initial Training in YTS.

These sources will be examined in the exercises which follow.

● ● ● ● EXERCISE 1. PRE-ADMISSION INFORMATION

Whole group activity

This activity should help you to identify the information which is relevant to the pre-admission stage for learners with special educational/training needs.

Brainstorming exercise.

List the kinds of information you would like to have about the learner with special education/training needs. Refine the list.
(Keep this list available for comparison in the following activities.)

● ● ● EXERCISE 2. REPORTS

Small group activity

This exercise helps you to consider the nature and value of information available from reports.

The staff members undertaking pre-admission selection will have access to reports from a variety of sources which may include:

- record of achievement
- a statement of special educational needs

- careers officers' reports
- social workers' reports
- probation officers' reports
- youth custody reports
- employment rehabilitation centre reports
- parents' reports
- learner's statement
- YTS Initial Training case conference report
- medical report
- paramedical reports
  - – physiotherapy
  - – occupational therapy
  - – speech therapy
  - – audiology
- psychologicial reports
- psychiatric reports

Step 1. Take the report(s) and ask the following general questions; and note your answers.

- Are the report(s) current? (date)
- What learning needs/problems emerge?
- Are they problems in your setting?
- For whom are they a problem?
- What solutions are suggested?
- What problems/learner needs remain unmet?
- What gap in provision is revealed?
- How can this gap be filled?
- What steps can be taken to achieve access in its widest sense?

Step 2. Take the report(s) and consider the list of information arising from Exercise 1, with reference to it/them. Note your answers.

Step 3. Ask the following specific questions about the report(s) and note your answers.

- What does it tell you about the learner's achievement/competences?
- What does it *not* tell you that you think is important? (Check your list from Exercise 1).
- How will it help you to plan the teaching/training programme?
- Does it only record negative features (disabilities) or does it record positive achievements (abilities)? What implications does this have for the way you view the learner and plan the teaching/training programme?
- What advice does it give you on any additional support/special techniques which may be necessary to assist the learner to learn?

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Each small group should feed back the outcomes of their discussions.

Guidelines for facilitators

You will need to ensure that a variety of reports relevant to your setting are available for this activity. Make sure that you preserve anonymity in any sample you use.

EXERCISE 3. APPLICATION FORM

Small group activity

This exercise is designed to assist you in examining and modifying the application form used at your establishment in order to ensure that it is relevant for all potential trainees or students, including those with special needs.

Obtain copies of your establishment's application form.

Form groups of three or four.

Take your own establishment's application form.

Discuss it critically in relation to your amended list of information requirements stemming from Exercise 1.

Is there any information sought which is irrelevant/unnecessary?

What information has been omitted? How and where can you obtain this information?

Redesign your application form by modifying and supplementing it to make it more relevant and useful for learners with special needs.

What information do you need which can reasonably be provided by the applicant?

What other information do you need? How and where can you obtain it?

(NB. It is good practice to secure the agreement of the learner, and his or her parents if appropriate.)

EXERCISE 4. INTERVIEWING

Small group activity

Interviewing is an important part of the pre-admission assessment procedure and should focus on the negotiation and provision of a suitable education or training programme with adequate support for the special needs of the learner.

It should not be simply a selection or rejection process. It should identify the extra requirements of the trainees or students and respond accordingly. This also implies the preparedness to make a decision that any particular programme is not the most suitable for a learner and this should activate a guidance/counselling process which results in a suitable placement.

SIGNPOST
Element 8. **Guidance and Advice**

This exercise will help you consider the factors necessary for a successful pre-selection interview. Many of the principles will apply to other less formal 'interviews' with learners which occur during everyday teaching/training.

Form groups of three, four or five.

Step 1. Discuss and list the factors which you consider to be important in conducting a successful interview.

Step 2. Either choose a learner who you have interviewed recently in relation to his/her application for your course/training programme;

or select one of the case-study characters from the **Resources Section** at the end of the pack.

Summarise the information available to you prior to the interview, in no more than five or six short statements.

Step 3. Devise an interview procedure which meets with requirements you listed in Step 1.

Step 4. Check your interview procedure by asking the following questions. Make any necessary amendments.

- What information do you hope to obtain from the interview?
- How have you structured the interview to obtain that information?

- Who will be present at the interview: staff, applicant, or applicant with parent or representative?
- How have you made them feel at ease and relaxed?
- What type of questions have you used? Do they include predominantly open-ended questions/probes/closed questions? Why did you choose these questions?
- Did you consider the language used, e.g. is it simple, ambiguous, long-winded?
- Have you considered leaving enough time for applicants to answer, allowing for silences?
- How much time has been allocated to the interviewer, the applicant, his/her parents or representatives? Is the balance correct?
- Have you made allowances for finding out about the best mode of communication with the applicant? What alternative to verbal communication might be appropriate?
- Have you thoroughly investigated the extra support or provision which may be necessary for meeting the applicant's special education/training needs? Have you answers for how this will be made available? If not, what action will you take?
- Have you considered the interview environment, e.g. room layout?
- How will you record the information obtained from the interview? What options are there?
- Have you considered the confidentiality of the information gained? To whom should it be made available?

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Feed back the outcomes of each of the small group discussions. From these draw up a list of general guidelines for pre-admission interviews.

Consider together the adequacy of pre-admission information and interview procedures as a basis of decision for course/programme entry. What alternatives may be suitable? How can these be given effect in your place of work?

PRACTICAL FEATURES OF ASSESSMENT

- Assessment should generally be task orientated. It is not necessary to administer 'a special test'. The assessment should arise from the stated learning outcomes/competences.
- The procedure must be compatible with the performance criteria and conditions stated in the programme.
- It should provide feedback without delay.
- It should provide *specific* information that helps answer the questions posed, not general feedback.
- It should ensure that outcomes of assessment contribute to improved future performance and lead to modification in instruction, conditions and criteria.
- It should motivate and encourage learners, not destroy their confidence.
- It should allow learners to work at their own pace.
- It should record small steps in progress to aid confidence building and increase motivation.
- It should be realistic and achievable.
- It should offer appropriate pathways to accreditation.
- It should encourage learners to be involved in their own assessment.
- It should be an integral part of the teaching/training process.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

At the start of each new course or training programme, you will need to find out about the abilities, attainments and difficulties of the trainees or students. It will form an integral part of the development of an individual programme or individual training plan. There is some evidence that all relevant staff should be involved at the pre-admission and initial assessment stages so that a suitable learning or training programme can be devised at the outset. It is important to guard against intimidating the applicant by subjecting him or her to a massive interview panel and battery of assessment procedures, but with careful scheduling a happy medium may be struck.

SIGNPOST

Element 3, **Devising Individual Learning Programmes**, considers this issue in detail

As a teacher or trainer, you will be able to use the information made available to you from other sources, but you will still need to carry out your own assessments which are related specifically to the part of the course or training programme with which you are concerned.

EXERCISE 5. INITIAL INFORMATION

Small group activity

This exercise will enable you to consider the **specific** information which you need to know about your trainees or students. It will provide an opportunity to devise or review your own initial assessment schedule, and the activities or tasks necessary to provide you with the appropriate information.

Form small groups of three or four. It is preferable for you to work in course teams or in groups of staff concerned with the delivery of the same or similar programmes.

Step 1

Discuss and list the information you need about your learners at the beginning of your course or training programme.

Check that you have considered all of the following:

- existing capabilities
- previous experience
- levels of achievement
- aptitude
- interests
- areas requiring extra help
- special aids, adaptations or support required

Step 2

Either devise an appropriate initial assessment schedule or profile for your course or training programme;

or consider and discuss the initial assessment schedule or profile you use at present.

Check whether it gives you all the information you identified in Step 1. Make any necessary alterations.

Step 3

Devise a series of introductory activities or tasks which will enable you to obtain the information you need. This should provide your learners with an introduction to the kinds of practical activities they will be undertaking during the course or training programme.

NB. You may want to return to Steps 2 and 3 again having considered the different methods of assessment outlined later in this element.

Check that you have considered the following:

- How will you involve the learners in discussing and recording the outcomes?
- How will you find out more about any special education or training needs which are revealed:
  - through discussion?
  - supplementary activities?
  - what form will they take?

FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Assessment of learners should take place both during the course/training programme to monitor progress, and at the end to summarise achievements.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

- Can give feedback information on progress to the learner;
- can be used to identify areas of performance which need more work;
- helps to identify difficulties in learning;
- provides feedback to the teacher or trainer of the learner's progress and the starting points for teaching/training;
- should be built into learning materials and used throughout the learning process.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

- Can provide final judgements about achievements;
- is made at the completion of a course module, not just at the end of a whole course or programme;
- should be recorded and the results stored;
- can be used for certification purposes;
- should also be built into the learning process.

The same outline can be used for either formative or summative assessment. The process for devising your own assessments will be covered later in this element.

CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW

The continuous cycle of assessment, teaching or training, reassessment of progress, if unsatisfactory modification of teaching or training, then reassessment of progress, is one that you will be familiar with. It illustrates the way in which assessment forms an integral part of any teaching or training process. It also shows that assessment should lead to constant reappraisal and modification of teaching and training. In this way, all staff will be involved in the assessment process in their everyday teaching or training.

At various points throughout the course or training programme, there will be a systematic review of progress. In YTS a review of progress is planned for the end of the induction period, to involve trainees in the decisions about their training arrangements. This review should be based on the assessments made during the induction and initial evaluation processes and should result in an individual training plan. Those involved in the review group should include the trainees and external agencies such as the careers service and managing agents. The second main review in YTS occurs at the end of the training environment phase. This review takes the form of a case conference with internal and external agencies attending as appropriate, and should result in a review of the achievement of objectives and of the route. This will be expressed as a record of achievement and a specification of further need.

EXERCISE 6. NORM- OR CRITERION-REFERENCED ASSESSMENT

Individual activity

The purpose of this exercise is to help you to recognise examples of norm- and criterion-referenced assessment in practice.

Norm-referenced assessment compares the performances of individual students with each other. Most public examinations are norm-referenced and a set percentage of students will fail.

Criterion-referenced assessment involves setting an exact criterion or standard by which performance can be judged within a specified context. All students can pass if their performance is acceptable and meets the criterion or criteria.

Decide which of the following examples are norm-referenced and which are criterion-referenced approaches.

Add three other examples from your own practice.

1. A learner with a physical impairment improves his typing speed from 15 to 23 words per minute. The goal is 25 words per minute speed.
2. A learner with partial hearing will undertake an external examination consisting of course work, a project and a written examination. She or he will need to obtain the minimum pass mark in each part of the examination.
3. A learner with severe learning difficulties has passed an intermediate level swimming examination.
4. As a part of the final examination, a catering scheme learner is required to produce a nutritionally balanced, low salt, low calorie snack lunch.
5. A visually impaired learner will, by special arrangement, dictate answers to two written papers set by CGLI.
6. A learner who uses a wheelchair is assessed by observation of practical skills and the use of a check-list which is ticked. The skills are demonstrated to the required standard.
7. You notice in an applicant's report that she has an IQ score of 113 on the WISC.
8.

9.

10.

Whole group activity

Discuss your answers, including the final three individual examples. You may find it useful to check your conclusions with the following:

1. Criterion-referenced assessment
   The criterion for achievement is 25 words per minute. The performance is compared with previous performance and the criterion for success rather than with other people.
2. Norm-referenced assessment
   This is an example of an externally set examination, with a set pass mark, in which the examinees are marked against each other.
3. Criterion-referenced assessment
   The criteria for this level of examination have been achieved.
4. Criterion-referenced assessment
   The criteria for performance are stated. This can be used as a part of a summative record.
5. Norm-referenced assessment
   This is an externally set examination although the arrangements have been modified to meet special needs.

6. Criterion-referenced assessment
   The teacher or trainer would need to assess performance against the criteria on the check-list. If all items have been ticked, the record may provide a part of the summative record. Any skills which are lacking will be identified and may form the basis of the teaching or training environment. This contributes to formative assessment.
7. Norm-referenced assessment
   The score compares this applicant to everyone else.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Validity is the test of whether or not an assessment procedure measures what it is supposed to measure. Some assessment procedures, such as written examinations, may be just as much a test of memory and written communication skills, as a measure of the knowledge and skills which they seek to measure.

Reliability is the extent to which the outcomes of assessment remain the same when repeated on the same person on separate occasions or when carried out by different people by or with the same person.

● ● ● EXERCISE 7. VALIDITY

Small group activity

The purpose of this exercise is to enable you to consider whether your own assessment procedures or examinations have validity.

Advance preparation

You will need to ensure that participants are prepared to bring examples of their own assessment procedures.

Methods

Form small groups.

Take each of your assessment procedures or examinations and answer the questions below.

List the features the procedure seeks to assess.

List the *other skills* necessary in order to do so.
For example:

- memory
- reading
- writing
- listening

If you find that your procedures are very dependent on other skills, rewrite them to reduce this dependency.

● ● ● ● EXERCISE 8. ASSESSMENT METHODS

Whole group activity

These activities seek to help you to explore the range of possible methods of assessment.

Brainstorm the many possible methods of assessment.

Refine your list.

You may wish to compare your list with this one. It was produced by one group of people in response to this activity.

- observations
- progress sheets

- practical tests
- check-lists
- making something
- diaries
- demonstrating (doing something)
- log books (doing something)
- video recordings
- written exercises
- audio recordings
- projects
- role-plays
- discussions
- simulations
- computer-assessed tests
- multiple choice tests
- oral questioning
- self-assessment

EXERCISE 9. CHOOSING THE METHOD

Small group activity

The method you choose depends on:

- the nature of the task;
- the characteristics of the learner.

This exercise enables you to consider the choice of appropriate methods of assessment.

Form small groups.

List as many methods of assessing the following learning outcomes as possible.

Identify the method(s) which you feel to be the most appropriate.

1. Can change a tyre correctly.
2. Can ask relevant questions to elicit information.
3. Can explain the need for computer security.
4. Can show how formal and informal procedure are used by groups to conduct their business and achieve their purposes.
5. Can roll hair on curlers of the right size, in correct direction.
6. Can work co-operatively in group tasks.
7. Can connect up and prepare a simple microcomputer system for use.
8. Can express own feelings creatively through a chosen expressive medium.
9. Can use tools and equipment to standards required for safety and efficiency.
10. Can devise a plan for problem solving, identifying and accounting for possible constraint.
11. Can express a view on some creative purpose of specified art forms.
12. Can select relevant information for a particular purpose from 'face-to-face' situations.
13. Can understand the management of personal finance.
14. Can gather information on a range of job opportunities.
15. Can construct a simple wiring circuit with two bulbs and a double switching device.

EXERCISE 10. METHODS TO SUIT INDIVIDUALS

Small group activity

This exercise is designed to enable you to consider the most appropriate methods of assessment for some individual learners.

You will need the materials from Exercise 9. This should include your list of possible and preferred methods for assessment.

Form small groups.

Each group should select four or five of the case-studies.

Select some of the learning outcomes which could be applicable to each character.

Choose the most appropriate assessment methods for each example.

Describe any modifications you may need to make to the assessment procedure.

Whole group activity

Each group should feed back the outcomes of their discussions. A list of possible modifications should be drawn up.

EXERCISE 11. A CHECK-LIST FOR ASSESSMENT

Individual activity

Define learning outcomes

- What are the main aims of the course training programme?
- What are you trying to achieve?

List the objectives involved

- What knowledge and skills are involved?
- To which competences and outcomes do they relate?
- Do they relate specifically to the content or are they general, relating to the learning process and how the learner approaches the work?

Identify the learning situations

- What learning/training activities can you provide?
- What will the learner do?

Identify targets

- What constitutes evidence of progress?
- What are the precise criteria for each task?
- Are you concerned with the process or the finished product?

Selecting assessment method

- How will you assess performance?
- Will the methods differ for each task/each learner?
- How?

Recording outcomes of assessment

- How will you do this?
- Will the system be manageable?
- Will it be easy to use?
- Will they be used for certification?
- Do they fulfil your requirements of assessment?

● ● ● EXERCISE 12. IMPLEMENTING AN ACTION PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT

Small group activity

This exercise provides you with an opportunity to apply this action plan in practice. It enables you to consider your own assessment procedures.

Advance preparation

You will need to ensure that participants have a copy of the check-list and bring copies of their course outline or training programme with them. You may prefer to provide these yourself.

Methods

Form small groups. You may find this exercise easier if you work with colleagues who are members of the same course teams or who work on the same aspect of a training programme.

Take your course outline or training programme.

Carry out the action plan for assessment by answering the questions related to each stage.

Choose two or three of the case-studies from the Resources Section;

or identify a learner with special needs and with whom you have worked. Specify the modifications you made in order to meet his/her individual needs.

Describe any modifications you would need to make in order to meet the special needs of the individual concerned.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

This is a useful strategy for a number of reasons:

- It can improve communications and understanding between learner and teacher or trainer.
- Learners may be more motivated because they are actively involved in assessments.
- It provides a good way of checking the learner's view of his/her progress and attitude to the course/training programme.
- It can provide the tutor or trainer with information about the learner's special needs and with feedback on the effectiveness of the programme in meeting them.
- It can provide opportunities for advice and guidance through negotiation and discussion.

The approach selected for self-assessment depends on the purposes you wish it to fulfil. The learner will be required to:

- reflect on his or her own performance and reactions to it;
- give feedback to the tutor or trainer about the above;
- contribute to decision making in the assessment process;
- learn to make judgements about quality;
- develop an awareness of his or her performance in relation to the norm.

Successful self-assessment depends on a number of important factors:

- You must give the learner clear guidelines for self-assessment.
- Lecturers or trainers need time to develop skills in self-assessment.
- It is preferable for self-assessment to occur several times during a programme, but it will lose impact if used too frequently.
- It can be time consuming so needs to be carefully planned.
- Self-assessment may provide the basis of a summative record, but it *must* be supported by dialogue and negotiation between learner and tutor or trainer.

Suitable techniques include:

- a record of dialogue between learner and tutor or trainer, which is used as a prompt;

- the use of 'stimulus' or 'trigger' questions such as:
  I had most difficulty with . . .
  I still need to work on . . .
  The easiest parts are . . .
- Use of questionnaires, multiple choice or requiring comments. These can be written or on tape, as appropriate.

EXERCISE 13. SELF-ASSESSMENT

Individual activity

This exercise will enable you to develop a self-assessment procedure for use on your course or training programme.

Select one exercise, assignment or task, which is a part of your course or training programme.

Design a self-assessment format, sheet or form which may be used by your trainees or students to assess their own performance of the task identified above.

Identify ways in which this could be modified for use by learners with special needs.

Small group activity

Form small groups and discuss your self-assessment formats, sheets or forms. Make a list of the features which you have identified as important in devising a successful self-assessment procedure. List all possible modifications which may be made for learners with special needs.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Summative assessment should provide both a statement of achievements and suggest future provision. This may be expressed in terms of a specification of further needs and appropriate opportunities for progression.

Some forms of summative assessment are closely linked with accreditation and certification. YTS requires all trainees including those with special training needs to have opportunities to acquire vocational qualifications or credits towards one. The problem arising relates to the availability of appropriate qualifications to offer. All YTS trainees must receive certification detailing the main elements of their training programme and charting their progress. The advantages of credit accumulation, in which failures are not recorded, can be particularly pertinent to some learner with special needs.

For some learners with special needs the format of many existing qualifications denies access because the bottom rungs of ladders of competence and skills are out of reach. Rather than denying these people access to qualifications or altering the standards and thereby devaluing the meaning of the qualification, a modular approach to qualifications has been proposed. This modular approach allows credits for small blocks of achievements or elements of competence contributing to units of competence rather than whole job competence.

Records of achievement are often used to show progress towards objectives. They provide a clear, flexible, individualised statement of the learner's performance on set criteria, during the course/training programme. This is a sound general approach in both education and training and is particularly appropriate for learners with special needs.

Whatever the outcome in terms of certification or records of achievement, summative assessment should provide the 'ticket' for the next stage in the journey. This may be to further education or training opportunities or to employment.

RECORDS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Records of achievement are useful in a number of ways. They:

- give a positive emphasis to recording success;
- give a clear picture of exactly what the learner can do, under given conditions;
- encourage greater involvement of the trainee or student in the assessment and recording process;
- give motivation.

● ● ● EXERCISE 14. RECORDS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Small group activity

This exercise enables you to consider and modify records of achievement so that they can cater for all learners including those with special needs.

Advance preparation

You will need to obtain examples of records of achievement in current usage, such as LEA, YTS, RSA, Voc.Prep, CPVE, and the records currently in use by the participants.

Methods

Form small groups. Discuss your own record of achievement and any others which may have been provided, by answering the following questions.

What is its main purpose:

- to provide evidence for summative assessment and certification?
- to help structure the learner's experience?
- to provide a basis for review of learning and progress by learner and teacher or trainer?

How exactly is it intended to be used?

- Who fills it in?
- When?
- What sort of information is required?
- Who determined the assessment process?

Is it linked to any other form or method of assessment?

- Is a check-list included?
- Are levels/standards included? If so, how?

Would this record of achievement serve its purpose?

- Will it record the learner's real achievements?
- What will be the likely outcomes?
- Are entries dated?

Would this record cater for learners with special educational/training needs?

- Can it be used flexibly?
- Will the statements be achievable by learners with special needs?
- If not, how could they be modified?
- Will it lead to progression to further appropriate education, training or employment?

What improvements, additions or modifications would you suggest?

How will the information be presented?

- As a certificate of attendance or achievement?
- Will it be graded or be a statement of competence?
- Will it bear an endorsement if a modified assessment procedu[illegible]s been used?

What status or authority will it carry?

- Will it be transferable?
- Will it have national recognition?
- Will it be recognised by employers locally or nationally?
- Could it be an inhibiting factor? (Does it focus on the individual's need and what she or he *cannot* do?)

EXERCISE 15. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXAMINATION PROCEDURES

Small group activity

This activity enables you to consider the awards made by the major examining and validating bodies, including those used on your course or training programme, in relation to learners with special needs.

Advance preparation

Participants should be asked to bring examples used on their course or you will need to collect and have available examples of awards from examining and validating bodies. Examples include CGLI, RSA, BTEC, NCVQ.

Methods

Form small groups. You may find it easier to work in groups concerned with the same qualifications.

Discuss the following questions from the point of view of two case-study characters from the **Resources Section**.

Is a suitable 'off the shelf' award available? If so:

- Does it require modification or adaptation to suit the need of the individual?
- Whose responsibility is the modification? How can it best be secured?
- What constraints could not be overcome, e.g. legislation, industry led standards?

EXERCISE 16. MODIFYING EXAMINATION PROCEDURES

Small group activity

This activity provides you with the opportunity to consider how examination and assessment procedures may be modified to meet the special education or training needs of some learners.

Form small groups and list as many examples as you can of modified examination or assessment procedures.

Here are some examples to start your list:

- a student with severe emotional difficulties who is taught off site and sits the examination in the teacher's own home;
- the use of an interpreter for a pre-lingually deaf person;
- the use of braille for a visually impaired trainee or student;
- extra time and special moderation for a trainee with specific learning difficulties (with particular literacy problems).

Check whether your list includes suggestions which could accommodate the special needs of the case-study characters and any learners you work with.

Will standard assessment/examination procedures be used? If so:

- Is the liaison between the teaching/training staff and the administrative staff at the examining centres adequate?

- If not, how can it be improved?
- What special arrangements are made for learners with special needs, e.g. amanuensis, extra time, alternative presentation of 'paper'?
- Are they appropriate?
- Do they isolate candidates unnecessarily?
- Could they be a distraction to other candidates?
- Are appropriate facilities available, e.g. adapted or extended keyboards?

●●●●

Whole group activity

Each group should feed back their suggestions to form a summary list of possible modifications. You should contact the examining body to check what may be permissible for your own learners, noting that it may still be necessary to seek specific approval to vary any general access requirements. Always seek this in good time.

●●● EXERCISE 17. POLICY STATEMENTS AND REGULATIONS

Small group activity

This activity will help you to review and take action to ensure that policy statements and regulations are appropriate and reflect good practice.

Advance preparation

Obtain policy statements and regulations from each examining, awarding or validating body, appropriate to the participants' work with people with special needs. You may prefer each small group to consider the regulations of one body.

Methods

Form small groups.

List those features of particular relevance to learners with special needs and discuss the policy statement critically.

Draw up a model for good practice.

Use this model of good practice to reappraise the policy statement. List your proposed modifications.

Identify those within the examining bodies who have responsibility for this area. You may wish to feed back the outcomes of your discussions to them.

●●●●

Whole group activity

Each group should feed back the outcomes of their discussions and an overall model of good practice should be drawn up.

SUMMARY

EVALUATION CHECK-LIST

Can you:

- identify the information which you need to know about a potential learner with special needs, at the pre-admission stage?
- critically consider the value of information derived from reports?
- devise or modify an application form to obtain relevant information from applicants with special education or training needs?
- devise and carry out successfully a pre-selection interview?
- devise or review your own initial assessment schedule, and the activities or tasks necessary to provide you with the appropriate information?
- recognise and use norm- and criterion-referenced assessments?
- consider the validity and reliability of assessment procedures?
- identify a range of assessment methods and select appropriate ones to suit individual needs?
- outline and apply an action plan for assessment?
- develop a self-assessment procedure?
- consider the appropriateness of records of achievement to meet special education or training needs, and modify them accordingly?
- review the awards made by the major examining and validating bodies in relation to special needs?
- suggest modifications to examination and assessment procedures in order to meet special needs?
- critically review the policy statements and regulations of the major examination and validating bodies? Propose suitable amendments as appropriate?

SIGNPOSTS

Links to other elements include the following:

SIGNPOST

Element 8, **Guidance and Support**, considers the interpersonal skills necessary for conducting successful interviews.

SIGNPOST

Element 6, **Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials** – Section on Initial Assessment.

5

LEARNING SUPPORT

TRAINING/ TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

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INTRODUCTION

Learning arises from activity, and training/teaching approaches are the key to active learning. The use of a wide variety of methods allows different learning styles to flourish and this is essential in enabling people with special needs to learn in the most effective way for them. Variety arises from different ways of organising the learning activities, resources and environment. Clearly, choosing the most appropriate methods for meeting individual needs leads to successful learning.

KEY QUESTIONS

- How can you help learners to learn?
- How will you provide activity and variety to aid learning?
- How will you organise resources and environment to ensure active learning?
- What methods will you use?

AIMS

- To identify a variety of possible approaches to training/teaching and learning.
- To consider their application in meeting the individual needs of learners.

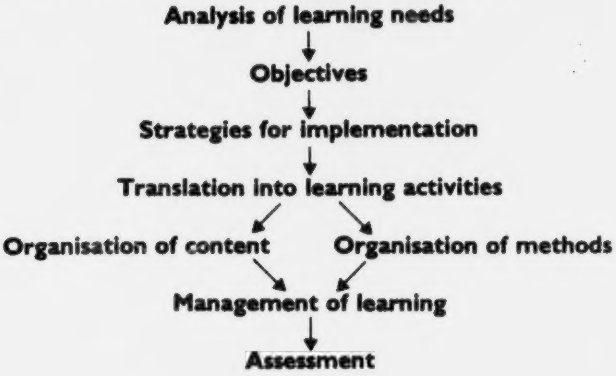
OBJECTIVES

By the end of this element you should be able to:

- recognise the value of activity and variety in assisting learning;
- list training/teaching methods appropriate to learners' individual needs;
- select and apply appropriate methods to suit individual learning needs;
- plan a learning programme relevant to stated objectives incorporating variety in learning activities, resources and methods of organisation.

SOME GENERAL POINTS ABOUT TRAINING/TEACHING

What is involved in the detailed implementation of plans?


Analysis of learning needs
Objectives
Strategies for implementation
Translation into learning activities
Organisation of content
Organisation of methods
Management of learning
Assessment

Trainers and teachers have the crucial role to play in the translation process.

What is required to be effective in this role?

Four features are important:

- Attitudes – having a positive approach towards learners and their needs

SIGNPOST

Introductory Element

- Knowledge – of learners' needs and interests
  – of appropriate methods and approaches to enable learners to learn
  – of content

SIGNPOST

Element 3. **Devising Individual Learning Programmes**

SIGNPOST
Element 5. **Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies** – Section 3

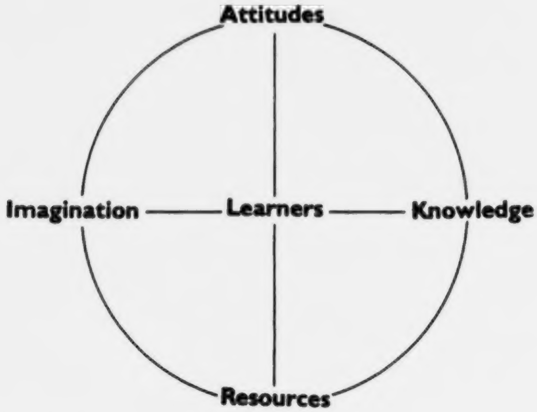
- Resources – using self, learners and the whole environment, designing and adapting materials to meet individual needs and interests.

SIGNPOST
Element 5. **Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies** – Sections 2 and 3

SIGNPOST
Element 6. **Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials**

- Imagination – finding interesting ways of using knowledge and resources to promote learning.

These features all relate to supporting learners.



Remember that you are planning and preparing for:

- the delivery of your overall part of the programme;
- the individual sessions which make it up.

It is the application of appropriate attitudes, knowledge, resources and imagination which will make learning successful. Two key features of this are variety and activity.

Variety

Trainees and students have different styles of learning, therefore no single approach on its own will satisfy their needs. This applies equally to the overall programme and any individual session within it.

Activity

Much current training and educational practice is based on the notion that trainees and students learn most effectively by being actively involved in learning. The process of experience ('doing something'), followed by reflection ('thinking about what has been done'), leads to learning.

These two features are now explored in more detail in Section 1.

I. ACTIVITY AND VARIETY

● ● ● EXERCISE I. EXPLORING ACTIVITY AND VARIETY (i)

Small group activity

Activity and variety are widely acknowledged as being important features of the learning process. This exercise provides you with an opportunity to explore them.

Advance preparation

You will need sufficient copies of the sheets, 'Diary of Chris Jones' and 'The options – a discussion'.

Methods

1. Read the extract from the Diary of Chris Jones (Stimulus Sheet 1).
2. Discuss options 1 – 5 (Stimulus Sheet 2).
3. Select one and give your reasons for doing so.
4. Compare your choice with the comments on the sheet 'The options – a discussion'.
5. Discuss any points which emerge.

STIMULUS SHEET I. DIARY OF CHRIS JONES, STAFF MEMBER (EXTRACT)

Arrived 8.55 in staff room. Actually got to work at 8.35. Delay due to getting involved in 'earnest debate' with Head of Centre over best position in which to leave my car. Apparently the 'goods delivery' space means what it says! Couldn't find my file. That's what I must have spilt coffee on at home. All deposits withdrawn from resources bank. Arrived at room 9.05. The group of students waiting attentively, (well, awake – just) for the session to start. I have nothing; no video, no equipment, only myself. What do I do?.

1. Talk about the topic until 10.30 break?
2. Talk about the topic and get the learners to write some notes in their files (if they have them)?
3. Talk about the topic for 20 minutes, then organise the learners into groups and let them talk about it for an hour?
4. Talk about the topic for 10 minutes, put the main points on the chalkboard, let the learners talk then record their points. Proceed in the same cycle, developing the subject each time?
5. Explore the meaning of 'goods delivery' spaces and their relevance to economic development?

STIMULUS SHEET 2. THE OPTIONS – A DISCUSSION

How successful is each option likley to be?

1. Even if you are Billy Connelly or Victoria Wood, you are unlikely to hold the learners' attention. Little, if any, learning will take place since all learners have a limited span of attention. For many learners with special needs this is very short.
2. Better than option 1, but learners will become bored very quickly. Can they all take notes?
3. Could be successful, but it hasn't been planned. Could also be a disaster. Much depends on the instructions for discussion and the possession of appropriate skills by the learner to enter into discussion. Do they know enough about the topic? Are they able to listen, take turns, form ideas, build on them?
4. The best option. Learners are involved. There is variety of activity. There is feedback. There is frequent teacher or trainer involvement. You can adjust the focus to meet learners' interests.
5. Tempting perhaps, but . . .

Why is option 4 most appropriate?

The key is the activity and variety which the approach incorporates.

WHY ACTIVITY?

Chinese proverb

I hear and I forget
I see and I remember
I do and I understand.

There is a wealth of evidence available to support the active learning approach. (Indeed the philosophy now underpins many course frameworks and programmes, e.g. BTEC, CPVE and YTS.)

SIGNPOST
Element 2. **Curriculum/ Training Programme Design and Evaluation Strategies** – Design principles.

All learners, and particularly those with special needs, are likely to be more responsive to 'doing' than simply 'listening'. It enables them to show, both to themselves and to others, that they have learned. The implications are that the learners are active during a learning session; making something, arguing, writing. This can be on either a group or an individual basis, with the learners involved in making decisions about what they learn, when. This means negotiation of the learning programme and a flexible response from staff.

From this we cannot identify any particular methods because they must be negotiated to serve the interests of both the teacher and the learner. Satisfying the interests of both will always be a compromise between 'what the learners are interested in' and 'what is in the learners' interest'. The compromise is the result of negotiation between both parties.

WHY VARIETY?

SIGNPOST
Introductory Element

SIGNPOST
Element 2. **Curriculum/ Training Programme Design and Evaluation Strategies**

SIGNPOST
Element 3. **Devising Individual Learning Programmes**

However closely you identify the needs and interests of learners you cannot be certain of precisely how they learn. Learning styles vary considerably. Therefore by offering a variety of approaches to learning you can serve the interests of most learners.

Variety within a learning session also aids response. You may have already seen in Element 3, **Devising Individual Learning Programmes** that the attention span for some learners with special needs is fairly short. You can maintain interest and involvement through providing new and different ways of approaching the same theme or topic.

EXERCISE 2. EXPLORING ACTIVITY AND VARIETY (ii)

Small group activity

It is important to recognise that activity and variety apply to both you and to the learner. This exercise explores the role which learners play in a planned session and the need to plan for them.

1. Read the outline plan for a learning session (Stimulus Sheet 3).
2. Discuss and write down:
   a) what is good about the session
   b) what is bad about the session
3. Read the 'Good points/bad points' follow-up sheet (Stimulus Sheet 4).
4. Complete the 'Learner activity sheet' (Stimulus Sheet 5).
5. Compare your comments with those on the completed 'Learner activity sheet' provided.

Guidelines for facilitators

This activity should be undertaken in three stages:

1. Provide group members with the sheet 'Outline plan for learning session'. The group then undertakes points 1 and 2 of the exercise. Discussion.
2. Provide group members with the 'Good points/bad points' sheet. The group then reads the sheet and completes the 'Learner activity list'. Point 3. Discussion.
3. Provide group members with the 'Learner activity sheet' (completed). Group members compare this with their lists and discuss the issues raised.

STIMULUS SHEET 3. OUTLINE PLAN FOR LEARNING SESSION

10.00 Introduction	
10.05 Recap on previous session	Question and answer
10.10 Introduction to new topic	Talk
10.25 Development of topic	Slides, Q and A
10.40 Case-studies	Tape recorder, Q and A
11.00 Some recent developments	Video
11.20 Go over main points of topic	Talk, Q and A
11.30 End	

STIMULUS SHEET 4. GOOD POINTS/BAD POINTS

Good points

1. Planned.
2. Frequent change of activity
3. Variety of audio/visual aids
4. Topic is linked to previous and next session.

Bad points

Before looking at these look back at the plan and write down learner activity next to the times indicated below.

Learner activity

10.00

10.05

10.10

10.25

10.40

11.00

11.20

11.30

STIMULUS SHEET 5. LEARNER ACTIVITY SHEET (COMPLETED)

Learner activity

10.00 Learners quiet or talking (or talking to one another).
10.05 One or two learners answering.
10.10 Learners listening (or not).
10.25 Learners looking and responding (or dozing in the blackout).
10.40 Listening again.
11.00 Watching and listening to the programme or thinking about what is on TV tonight.
11.20 Listening or getting things together for...
11.30 Quick exit.

Despite the variety of stimuli the session may achieve very little. The learners are passive not active. They are allowed to respond but not generate. Learning opportunities are limited.

CONCLUSIONS

From the exercise you have just undertaken several issues emerge.

You need to:

- manage the learning rather than be the fount of knowledge;
- know what methods are available to you;
- select and apply those methods which will be most effective in fulfilling the learning objectives for learners with special needs.

Each of these is now looked at in turn.

2. THE MANAGEMENT OF LEARNING

What does the management of learning involve?

Three features are important:
(a) space
(b) time
(c) people

A. SPACE

● ● ● EXERCISE 3. THE USE OF SPACE

Small group activity

Learning takes place within a setting, whether it is a classroom, workshop, laboratory or workplace. How that setting is organised affects how and what learning takes place.

This exercise helps you to explore how the organisation of the setting affects the learning relationship between trainer and trainee or teacher and student.

Methods

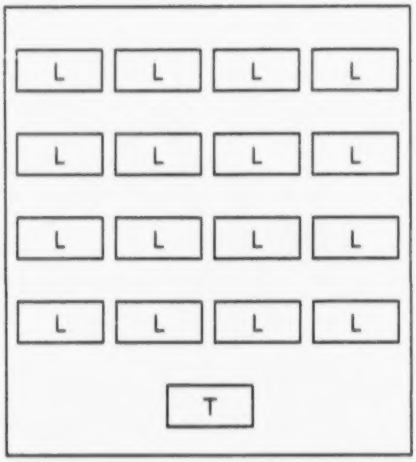
1. Look at Stimulus Sheet 6, 'Settings'.
2. Complete the schedule on the sheet.
3. Compare and discuss your responses with Stimulus Sheet 7, the completed schedule. What particular features do you consider important?

Guidelines for facilitators

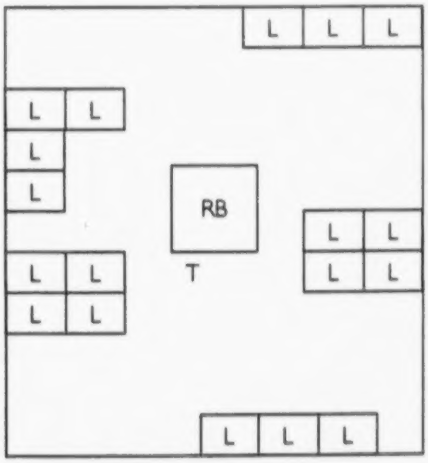
1. Form small groups.
2. Issue Stimulus Sheet 6, 'Settings'. Groups to complete the schedule.
3. Issue Stimulus Sheet 7, 'Completed schedule'.
4. Discuss the issues raised.

STIMULUS SHEET 6. SETTINGS

Setting A



Setting B



Key
T – Teacher or trainer
L – Learner
RB – Resources Bank

Schedule

Now write down what each setting implied in terms of:

	Setting A	Setting B
The role of the learner		
The role of teacher or trainer		
Potential for activity		

STIMULUS SHEET 7. COMPLETED SCHEDULE

	Setting A	Setting B
Role of the learner	– Learners likely to be passive – Little opportunity for individual discussion or interaction.	– Active learning possible. – Room for individual/small group activity. – Freedom of interaction with others and materials
Role of the teacher or trainer	– Focal point for work. – Likely to involve all learners at once.	– Freedom to move and interact with individuals/ groups.

Setting B, then, is more likely to promote the activity and variety discussed above.

In fact the setting B type of layout is becoming more common in establishments. One example is the development of multi-skills workshops where a number of skills (office activities, construction trade) are integrated, allowing learners to experience, develop and transfer such skills.

The setting does not have to be purpose built. It is quite possible to modify the arrangements of setting A to a more active learning environment.

EXERCISE 4. CONSOLIDATION

Individual activity

Once you have completed the schedule, it is useful to try out the ideas in practice.

1. Look at the settings you use.
2. Try out different forms of arrangement of furniture and resources.
3. Record the impact which such changes make.
4. Compare them with those made by colleagues.

Guidelines for facilitators.

1. This activity should take place over a number of weeks.
2. Group members should negotiate the changes they will make.
3. Give them time to try out the changes (say a fortnight).
4. The group should bring back for discussion their observations on the changes.

SUPPORTING LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN A LEARNING WORKSHOP

Some learners with special needs may require considerable help in adjusting to this more independent learner-centred style of working. They may have had long experience of being dependent on adults to make decisions, direct activities and sort out problems. All kinds of difficulties can arise, for example:

- Where is the equipment kept?
- What is the right tool to use?
- How do I use the equipment?
- What instructions do I follow?
- What order do the worksheets go in?
- Where do I find. . .?

Some suggestions:

- Establish a routine which can be followed (but not slavishly).
- Use a check-list to let the learners find where equipment and resources are kept when introducing both the whole environment and specific settings.
- Ensure that each learner has a ring binder or similar means of keeping complete work and worksheets in order.
- Record completed work on a check-list at the end of each session (to be kept with learners' work).
- Use visual and written signs to mark the location of resources.
- Where possible use storage equipment which allows the learner to gain easy access. Taking turns in issuing resources can enhance responsibility in learners.

Establishing a pattern for working also helps in:

- illustrating what the end product will be like, through a drawing, demonstration or actual example;
- collecting necessary resources;
- organising resources;
- carrying out the task;
- checking that the task is completed against a check-list;
- keeping the environment tidy;
- evaluating the work with another learner;
- clearing away;
- recording the task.

B. TIME

It was suggested earlier that learners with special needs benefit from engaging in a variety of activities within a single session to help them sustain concentration.

However, two problems arise in relation to the timing of the lesson:

- how long should each part of the lesson last?
- how long can the variation in speed of work by learner be catered for?

The length of each part of the lesson will depend on the total length of the teaching/training session, the learning objectives and the learners' level of competence. It may also depend on the mood of the learners and the time of day. Students may be able to concentrate for longer in the morning than in the afternoon. Some learners may find it difficult to settle down on Monday mornings after the weekend and so on.

In general, at least two-thirds of the session should be allocated for learners to be working on assignments. In sessions where learners can spend a lot of time sitting (such as communication skills, literacy, numeracy or health education), it is important to ensure that there are opportunities for learners to change activities, e.g. from listening to taping, writing or drawing. In practical or creative activities trainees will be moving around and may be involved in a number of different processes. In these sessions it is important to allow time for learners to sit and discuss what they have achieved. This is a practical application of the process: experience, reflection, learning.

As the session progresses learners will complete their work at different points because not all learners work at the same rate. Coping with the learner who always finishes first and the learner who never seems to finish anything can be equally difficult. Some of the techniques described in Section 3 can help to overcome this problem, such as the use of individual work programmes which allow the learner to work through a long-term project or series of planned assignments at his or her own pace. However, this may be neither appropriate nor possible and, in that case, the following suggestions may prove helpful.

SIGNPOST
Element 3. **Devising Individual Learning Programmes**

- Set one or two tasks that you know everyone will complete by the end of the session. This helps to prevent the feelings of failure engendered in learners who never manage to complete a piece of work.
- Match learners according to their pace of work – in some tasks a fast learner can help a slow one. On the other hand you may prefer to have homogenous groupings, which allow faster groups to tackle more work.
- Be clear about your teaching/learning objectives as this will help you focus on the content and timing of the session.
- Have a range of activities related to the subject matter available for use by learners who tend to finish early. This gives them something to get on with and prevents them from distracting others who are still working. Examples include quizzes, finding small words in a large word, crosswords, finding the hidden shape, grouping/sorting activities.
- There are those learners who work slowly but who are relatively able and those who work quickly but whose standard is poor. Encourage the first group to time their work by working against the clock. The second group should be asked to evaluate their work in terms of presentation and consider how it could be improved. Invite them to do it again if they wish.
- Do not be depressed if the learner never seems to get through all the work you planned. It is better to plan too much than too little and there is always next time.

EXERCISE 5. THE PRACTICAL USE OF TIME

Activity in pairs

Understanding the principles of managing time is best pursued by checking on your current practice. This exercise provides the opportunity to learn from such practice.

1. **Arrange for a colleague to observe one of your sessions.**
2. **Ask the chosen person to record the actual and percentage time spent on each of the following.**

	Actual time within session	%
Trainer or teacher explaining and giving information		
Learners working individually or in small groups		
Whole-group discussion		
Assessment		
Other activities		

3. **Discuss whether more or less time could or should have been spent on a particular activity.**

C. PEOPLE AS INDIVIDUALS

Here we are concerned with helping staff to identify behaviour problems and suggesting strategies for coping with or avoiding difficulties. Some possible solutions are brought to your attention. We are not, however, dealing with learners who may have severe emotional or behavioural disorders, and for whom specialised support may be needed.

Agreement on what constitutes a behaviour problem can be a problem in itself. Behaviour acceptable to one member of staff may be unacceptable to another and this can lead to a temptation to categorise staff as being too authoritarian or too permissive.

Individual staff can vary their responses on different occasions and many staff can appear authoritarian on one occasion and permissive on another. Some common problems are presented by learners who:

- refuse to carry out activities;
- wander round the room;
- leave the room;
- destroy their own work;
- show aggressive behaviour towards other learners;
- show extreme acting out behaviour, e.g. throwing things, shouting;
- show withdrawn or submissive behaviour, e.g. allowing themselves to be bossed or bullied by others;
- constantly demand your attention;
- fail to respond to questions or contribute to class discussion;
- consistently arrive late for class;
- fail to complete work;
- are unable to work within the group situation.

Some problems are related to general classroom or workshop management strategies and others may have to be solved on an individual basis.

SIGNPOST
Element 8. **Guidance and Support**

General classroom or workshop management strategies include:

- Tell the learners what you are going to do at the beginning of the lesson so that they are aware of the overall pattern of the session.
- Ensure that learners understand what they are being asked to do as frustration can lead to violent or aggressive behaviour.
- Avoid confronting learners in front of each other. Take the learner to one side, preferably to a quiet room, or suggest that you talk later.
- Do not expect all learners to concentrate all the time: their concentration span may be quite limited. Vary the tone and pitch of your voice and avoid spending too long using one method of input or on one activity. Find ways of stimulating curiosity and interest.
- Set realistic targets and remember to give encouragement and give praise when a target is reached. It may be an achievement for one learner to contribute to a discussion and for another to stick to the subject.
- Establish ground rules – these can be set through discussion with the whole group. Ask them to consider what behaviour they find irritating and how it can best be coped with.
- Try to stand back from the situation and decide how far a particular behaviour that is worrying you actually matters. If the rest of the group appear to be undisturbed then it may be best to leave well alone.
- Have plenty of back-up material available for learners who finish assignments quickly.
- Gauge the mood of the group – if they appear particularly restless or high-spirited you may need to alter what you had planned to do by using more formal activities which require a limited amount of classroom movement, e.g. drawing, tracing, copying,

computation or comprehension exercises. Such formal activities are useful ways of defusing situations before moving on to more interesting and stimulating activities.

- Seek advice from the course tutor, counsellor or course team.
- Be aware of learners' individual pressure points; which one has difficulty in reading, family problems, a long journey, a hearing or visual impairment? These factors should not become an excuse for anti-social behaviour but sensitivity on the part of the tutor or trainer can help avoid embarrassing or compromising a learner.

SIGNPOST
Element 5. **Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies** – Section 3

- You may also find behaviour modification techniques useful. Behaviour modification seeks to change behaviour patterns through a systematic programme of positive and negative reinforcements. For example, it can be used to modify group behaviour by identifying ground rules to help the conduct of the class, i.e. arriving punctually, allowing other learners to work in peace. Having pinpointed the target or desired behaviour, the trainer or teacher rewards learners who achieve it through praise (e.g., 'Thank you for arriving on time') and ignoring those who do not, the premise being that everyone desires attention and will strive to achieve it.

EXERCISE 6. SOLVING BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS

In pairs or small group activity

Individual behaviour problems can be very disruptive for both staff and other learners. We have given (above) some general points to consider.

This exercise focuses on individual problems of behaviour which face the teacher or trainer. It is designed to help you to apply your skills together with those of your colleagues in order to tackle these difficulties.

1. Either identify one of the problems from the list above or a problem behaviour which you are facing in your current work.
2. Explain the problem to your partner/group.
3. Design a strategy to overcome it together. The following questions will help.
    - How many learners do this?
    - How often?
    - Does it irritate or distract other members of the group?
    - Is it dangerous?
    - How can I overcome it?
4. Repeat the activity, this time with your partner or another group member identifying a problem behaviour.

In this way you can share experience and approaches.

PEOPLE – AS GROUPS

What is the value of using group work for learners with special needs?

So far the concentration has been on people as individuals. Great benefit in learning is gained from using groups.

Groups:

- help to transfer the focus of activity from you to the learner;
- provide learners with opportunities to take responsibility and make decisions;
- increase learners' sense of worth and self-confidence;
- offer experience in working with others;
- give learners more freedom to choose what they do.

What is the function of group work?

There are three elements: *communication, co-operation* and *competition.*

- Communication activities
    - planning a course of action
    - expressing opinions and describing events
    - expressing feelings and emotions

  - reporting back to whole groups
  - offering solutions
- Co-operative activities
  - sharing out tasks
  - taking turns with equipment
  - making a group shape – what does this mean?
  - producing a joint piece of work
- Competitive activities
  - playing games
  - quizzes
  - quantity v. quality output, i.e. comparing how much is produced with how good it is

How do you develop group work?

A step-by-step approach

		Time
Step 1 –	Ask questions of each learner in written form to be answered individually.	2–3 sessions
Step 2 –	Working in pairs Ask questions or set small tasks. Learners start to share ideas.	2–3 sessions
Step 3 –	Setting group tasks Let learners choose groupings – 2–5 per group. Set different tasks for each group so as to encourage communication and co-operation. Avoid competition. Collect feedback yourself. Learners become used to a larger group.	2–3 sessions
Step 4 –	Mixing the groups, (the 'Rainbow'). Let learners choose groupings. Set different task for each group. When task is completed remix the groups so that each learner reports back on task to a different group.	

Task group

Red Group 4 learners	Yellow Group 4 learners
Green Group 4 learners	Blue Group 4 learners

Report group

Red Yellow Green Blue	Red Yellow Green Blue
Red Yellow Green Blue	Red Yellow Green Blue

A rainbow of strangers is created to share reports.

Step 5 – The mixed group
You choose the groupings. Possibly set the same task to introduce competition. Learners working with strangers on tasks.

The time devoted to each of these steps is important. Let the learners become familiar with each step before you move on to the next. This builds up confidence and ability to cope with new procedures. You will judge best with your own learners how quickly you can move between the steps. The time suggested serves only as a guide. If the learners have already established the skills for some of the steps then you can select the group structure which best suits the learning situation.

These steps are only a guide. For some tasks you may want a mix of individuals (as a learning experience itself). Remember, however, that learners will tend to learn best when they feel comfortable and secure, so building an atmosphere of security promotes learning. This includes both an appropriate level of difficulty of task and an environment which is supportive.

What happens in groups?

As well as providing outcomes or products, groups also involve processes which are learning experiences in themselves. It is important for both you and learners to be aware of these underlying processes to enable them to function more effectively within the group.

Learners can be guided towards awareness by:

- Asking the learners to record their observations on how they worked in a group. Questions might include:
  - Who did you work with?
  - Have you worked with them before?
  - Who decided you would work together?
  - Who worked hardest?
  - What did you do?
  - What did your partner/other members of the group do?
  - Did you help anybody? How?
  - Did anybody help you? How?
- Allocating an observer to each, ask them to note:
  - who spoke first;
  - who didn't speak at all;
  - who talked the least;
  - who became bored.

How do you manage groups?

Make sure the learners know:

- What they are to do. Give clear instructions and objectives.
- How are they to do it. What sort of group mix, what resources they need.

Prompt sheets can help both of these.

Learners can find difficulty with groups but here are some examples of what to do:

- Seat quiet learners opposite talkative ones.
- Put partially hearing learners close to others so that light falls on their faces.
- Make verbal instructions clear and explicit to aid partially sighted learners.
- In exceptional circumstances, either allow particularly disruptive learners not to join a group, but to participate in feedback;
- or allocate a particular task within the group to such a learner.

What do you do while groups are working?

While groups are working:

- Keep moving around.
- Don't stay too long with any one group.
- Watch for groups achieving very little – they probably need help.
- Help slow learners.
- Don't interrupt learners unnecessarily, they may be doing quite well without you!

How do you handle feedback?

Some learners may be shy or lack confidence in reporting the findings of a group. You can:

- ask each group to summarise findings in a hand-out;
- design an exercise which requires learners to switch groups and exchange information on findings, e.g. broken information exercise;
- ask learners to record their findings on a chart or OHP for you to relay to the rest.

EXERCISE 7. TRYING OUT GROUP WORK

Individual activity

If you have not had much experience with group work, it can sometimes be difficult to try it out. This exercise provides you with the opportunity to develop the approach and to judge its value.

1. Choose a topic from your area of work for which you have previously used a 'whole group' approach.
2. Adapt the topic to a suitable small group method. (Use the ideas and information in the text to help you plan this.)
3. Try out your plan. While trying it out:
   - observe the differences in learner behaviour between the two styles;
   - list the differences in your role in:
     - planning the session
     - conducting the session;
   - note any changes needed in order to assess work;
   - note any differences in resources you need for each method;
   - note how you organise the setting;
   - check on how time is allocated to the various parts of the session.

You may find it useful to have a colleague to help you observe the trial.

4. Use the comparisons you have drawn to discuss with colleagues how well the approach worked. What modifications are needed? Does the approach work?

SUMMARY

Key points about managing learning:

- Be sensitive to needs.
- Make detailed preparation for use of time, space and resources.
- Allow the learners to do – don't impose your knowledge or ideas too much.
- Use yourself as a resource.
- Group work enhances both process and product skills.
- Stimulate involvement and development.

3. TRAINING/TEACHING METHODS

What methods are available to you?

EXERCISE 8. THE RANGE OF METHODS

Individual activity

Learning is best enhanced when appropriate methods are used. However, you cannot apply the appropriate method if you only know a few alternatives. The greater your armoury of alternatives, the more easily you can respond to needs in a flexible way.

Below is a list of methods and a space to record your response to them. Try out the list now and return to it periodically as you progress. (It is not a test).

	HAVE TRIED			HAVE NOT TRIED			
METHOD	Successfully	Unsuccessfully	Would use again	Need to ask what it is	Sounds useful	Would use if I knew how	*Comments* e.g. would use this for:
Brainstorming							
Brains Trust							
Buzz Group *							
Case History							
Case Study							
Debates							
Demonstration							
Discovery/Experimental Method *							
Discussion *							
Distance Teaching							
Field Trip							
Individual Practice							
Interview							
Laboratory							
Lecture							
Projects *							
Questionnaire							
Role Play							
Seminar							
Simulation *							

* Indicates methods given further consideration within this element

	HAVE TRIED			HAVE NOT TRIED			
	Successfully	Unsuccessfully	Would use again	Need to ask what it is	Sounds useful	Would use if I knew how	*Comments* e.g. would use this for:
Task Analysis *							
Team Teaching							
Tutorials							
Work Cards							
Work Shops							

* Indicates methods given further consideration within this element

SOME METHODS EXAMINED

The methods selected from the list are:

Brainstorming
Buzz group
Discussion
Experiential learning/discovery method
Projects
Simulation
Task analysis

These have been picked because they are methods which many staff have used successfully with learners with special needs. We must emphasise that they are not the only methods that can be used.

BRAINSTORMING

What is it?

The outpouring of ideas, usually by a group, related to an area of interest or problem. For a limited time (never less than five minutes, never more than fifteen minutes), ideas are presented freely and recorded without alteration or comment. It is not necessary that ideas should be related to each other. Quantity is more important than quality.

What are its uses?

- To identify several alternative ideas before making a decision.
- To consider many aspects of a problem, before attempting a solution.
- To act as a trigger to group discussion.

How to use it

The tutor or trainer should:

- explain the method to the group;
- suggest that a time limit be set;
- suggest that a recorder log every idea, (blackboard, overhead projector or flip chart) where the group can see them;
- urge that as many ideas as possible be produced;
- encourage far-fetched ideas since they may later lead to practical ideas;
- discourage criticism and evaluation of ideas;
- keep the group moving on to different varieties of ideas.

After the brainstorming session you should:

- ask the group to select a shortlist of ideas;
- encourage the identification of similar ideas, and their grouping together;
- encourage discussion of major ideas, or their possible solutions;
- encourage the storing for future reference of ideas that are not going to be used immediately.

When would you not wish to use a brainstorming method?

Brainstorming an educational visit: a worked example

This example has a dual function. It illustrates the use of brainstorming and also (in this instance) focuses on the educational potential and implications of a trip away from the normal course venue.

Depending on course content and objectives (which you may like to discuss), other potential visits may include the following to which you and your group may wish to add:

YTS: ITEC sports stadium, Outward Bound Centre
FE: Industrial visit, residential experience

Your group is considering the impact of information technology on jobs in your area. A member of the group says she has a contact in the data-processing department of a company in a nearby town and offers to arrange a visit. There is no train service and buses are infrequent. Your class and you set out to plan the activity. One learner is in a wheelchair.

Brainstorm the arrangements necessary to achieve a successful visit, as a preliminary to working out a formal programme and any other documentation required for distribution to the group going on the visit.

Brainstorm ideas:

- Preparatory classwork
- Follow-up classwork
- Transport timings
- Contact names at company
- Any regulations for visits
- Insurance cover
- Attenders/non-attenders
- Meal arrangements
- Loos for disabled people
- Badges
- Details to those who missed session when arrangements made
- Booking coach/payments
- Cancellation terms
- Collection of money
- Objectives of visit
- Evaluation of visit
- Materials required for/during visit
- Rendezvous
- Car/coach parking
- Costs
- Reprographics
- Check-list of questions/activities while on visit
- Access for disabled people
- Letter of confirmation of arrangements

- Letter of thanks
- Attendance list for company
- Numbers
- Walking distances out of doors
- Others interested to accompany class on visit
- Questions, etc., in advance to company so that they can prepare adequately.

You may wish to consider further brainstorming or other approaches to fill out individual items on the above list.

Rearrange lists of agreed items for inclusion using a blackboard, pin-up sheet, overhead projector or flipchart (to be developed eventually as a check-list to aid the success of the event). An example would be:

Academic/course work:

- Objectives of visit
- Preparatory classwork/homework
- Check-list of questions/activities while on visit
- Follow-up activities
- Evaluation of visit – did it achieve its objectives?

Administration:

- Costs
- College regulations
- Insurance cover
- Timings/rendezvous
- Coach booking/payment arrangements/cancellation terms
- Maps for independent travellers/coach driver
- Car/coach parking
- Details for absentees
- List of attenders
- Meal arrangements
- Badges
- Clothing
- Walking distances out of doors
- Access for disabled people
- Reprographics
- Task allocation
- Collection of money/accounting records

BUZZ GROUP

What is it?

An informal division of a group into sub-groups, usually of between three and eight people. It is normally used for only part of a session – often for merely a few minutes at a time – and may be repeated, with the same or different membership, in the same session. It may have an appointed leader or be leaderless.

What are its uses?

- To avoid teacher- or trainer-centredness.
- To change pace or focus.
- To provide feedback on your input.
- To release tension.
- To establish/maintain contact among class members.

How to use it

You should:

- be clear as to the purpose;
- ensure the class is aware of the aim of the group and the exact topic;
- if feedback is desired, ensure a means for this (appoint a rapporteur, supply flip-chart, etc.);

- if there is no formal feedback, ensure the groups know this;
- announce the duration of the group session;
- decide in advance if movement to groups presents practical problems or not.

Examples

Use buzz groups to:

- defuse a controversy between two class members;
- break up cliques;
- plan the next sequence of group activity;
- mix shy and articulate members more productively.

What are the disadvantages of buzz groups?

DISCUSSION METHOD

What is it?

It consists of a group putting together its knowledge, ideas, options, in a co-operative endeavour to learn from one another. If members of the group ignore the co-operative element and fail to accept responsibility for facilitating, 'gatekeeping' and summarising, etc., then discussion becomes argument, debate a series of monologues by closed minds.

A discussion topic has the following criteria:

- It is interesting.
- It falls within the experience and/or knowledge of the group.
- It is open to different points of view
- It is clearly stated.

What is it for?

- To promote understanding (in addition to manipulative skills which are developed by practice).
- To pool knowledge in order to solve a problem.
- To develop critical thinking in order to overcome entrenched attitudes and prejudices.
- To give feedback to one another and to the tutor or trainer.
- To develop communication skills; listening as well as talking.

SIGNPOST

Element 8 **Guidance and Support** – Exercise 6 and Section on 'Attending and active listening'

When do you use it?

- When there is a need to build the class into a co-operative group.
- When problems/questions/comments emerge which seem to be of relevance to the whole group.
- When the tutor or trainer wants to assess whether the group members share a common understanding about a subject.
- When the group needs to plan to meet its own learning needs.

How do you use it?

Planning

You should:

- become familiar with the topic;
- prepare an outline and notes of main points;
- prepare questions to start the group going and keep it going;
- prepare the room and layout;
- think about the group members and how to make use of their special interests and experience in the discussion;
- encourage the group to think about the topic beforehand;
- prepare an introduction which will:
  - a) introduce the topic and state the purpose of the discussion;
  - b) stimulate the group interest and show how it concerns them.

Execution

You should:

- encourage the group to share responsibility for the discussion;
- be 'gatekeeper' and facilitator where necessary;
- enable leadership to flow round the group by resisting becoming the 'authority';
- encourage the group to evaluate its performance, calling on the recorder and summarising views from time to time.

The purpose of a discussion group

The sharing of experiences within the group is the *raison d'etre* of the discussion group. It provides those conditions in which the ideas and attitudes of the leader and the group members can be identified, examined and, if necessary, changed. Group discussion is necessary when group action is desired; it follows that the group must be prepared for group discussions, group ideas, group decisions, group policy, group plan, group follow-up, group action.

The major problem for the leader is how to guide and lead without interfering – how to get the 'best' and discard the irrelevant. This implies that the leader is clear about the objectives, but it is not the function of the leader to tell the group what their ideas should be, what decisions they should take. The group leader is, however, in a very strong position; how to use his position without abusing it is the art to be practised.

What does a discussion group provide?

Amongst the essentials it must provide:

- an opportunity to participate;
- an opportunity to learn:
  - a) to identify facts, ideas, concepts and to handle them;
  - b) to learn what their own attitudes are and to test their validity (for leader and group);
  - c) to test, examine, evaluate and analyse;
  - d) to contribute from their own experience and to learn from the experience of others;
  - e) to relate this joint experience to the problems, topics or matters under discussion;
  - f) to formulate new ideas; to think for themselves;
  - g) to express themselves in language which is logical and clear, in speech and in writing.

MORE ON COMMUNICATION SKILLS

As you can see, discussion can be a very powerful tool. However, young people with learning difficulties can have specific communication problems which inhibit their capacity to contribute to discussions.

Typical amongst these are:

- identifying and expressing feelings, needs and opinions;
- expressing concerns and frustrations through language;
- questioning the opinions, values and attitudes of others, particularly adults or authority figures (this may include you);
- general communication skills, e.g. listening.

The developmental stages of group work and such techniques as brainstorming and buzz groups (see above) can greatly aid confidence and ability to speak.

Listening and concentration skills can be developed through simple activities such as:

- learners sequencing a set of cards by following taped instructions;
- learners working in pairs and telling each other about their interests, likes and dislikes which are then related to the larger group;
- learners watching a video sequence, then recounting the main points.

EXERCISE 9. PRACTICAL DISCUSSION METHODS

Whole group activity

Good discussions depend on awareness and involvement. It is useful to develop your own awareness and involvement so that you can assist learners.

This exercise is designed to help you to explore the processes for discussion.

1. Brainstorm ideas about how learners can be encouraged to express their feelings and needs.
2. Form a discussion group around the ideas generated.
3. One member of the group is appointed as an observer. The observer should note examples of people who:
   - check that they understand what other people mean;
   - use people's names;
   - ask people to give concrete examples;
   - keep the discussion focused on the main issue.
4. After the discussion, take the information presented by the observer.

   Discuss any difficulties you had in expressing your own ideas and understanding each other.

   What techniques used by other members of the group did you find helpful in progressing the discussion?

Guidelines for facilitators

This activity will require some support if it is to be effective. You many need to take the lead:

1. to organise the brainstorm;
2. to formulate questions from the brainstorm to start discussion;
3. to appoint and brief the observer;
4. to organise the debriefing discussion.

An alternative way of observing would be to make a video recording of the session. You can then ask all group members to participate in the evaluation. This in itself should stimulate discussion.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (DISCOVERY METHOD)

What is it?

It is a broad term used to describe the processes involved in learning by doing. Learners are encouraged to note, try out, examine and explore activities, environments or even ideas.

What is it for?

- To obtain understanding through practical experience.
- To familiarise learners with materials.
- To pose problems for learners to solve.
- To promote self-reliance and responsibility through taking risk.

How do you use it?

The basic learning process involves

Experience → Reflection → Learning

Experience can occur:

- naturally within the teaching/training environment or locally (for example finding the way to a room or placement);
- as a planned part of the learning programme, for example planning and carrying out an event.

Reflection involves structured thinking or talking through the experience to draw out the main learning points.

In describing experiential learning you should:

- analyse learners' needs and interests to assess the nature and type of experience that they will benefit from and be stimulated to undertake;

- prepare by analysing the skills involved in the activity to ensure the gradual introduction of new elements;
- allow for risk taking. It is useful to set targets for learners a bit beyond their present level of operation. Recognising that this can create anxiety for learner and staff, support needs to be provided. But overprotection may negate the experience;
- plan for support. The level and type will depend on students'/trainees' developing capabilities and experience of situations;
- allow time to talk through the experience;
- provide follow-up activities and assessment. This is a vital part of the process. Analysing the experience encourages reflection and reinforces the learning (positive and negative).

● ● ● EXERCISE 10. USING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Small group activity

It is emphasised throughout this pack that active participation and the use of direct experience are powerful tools in assisting learning, particularly for learners with special needs.

This activity is designed to assist you to develop a successful approach.

1. Plan an experience for a group of your learners. The experience might be a visit to a workplace, a social event or simply finding their way around your establishment.
2. Use the following check-list of questions as a basis.

CHECK-LIST

Planning

- What things can this experience achieve?
- When is it going to take place?
- Where?
- Who must be consulted?
- What are the difficulties to be overcome?
- What resources does it need?

Operating

- What skills are the learners using:

– communication – reading and writing?

– numeracy – measuring, time-telling?

– practical – using equipment, safety?

– social – working with others? self-reliance?

– decision making – planning, finding out?

Reflecting and debriefing

- What happened?
- Where did it happen?
- When did it happen?
- Why did it happen?
- How did it feel?

3. Try out the approach with a group of learners.
4. Use the 'reflection and debriefing' questions to judge the approach. Discuss them with colleagues.

AN EXAMPLE FROM *TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD: A CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR STUDENTS WITH SEVERE PHYSICAL DISABILITY* (FEU, 1986)

Experiential Learning

Learning by doing has been a popular teaching technique in nursery and primary education since Piaget first postulated the view that a child's cognitive development is facilitated by learning through activity. However, children who are confined to a wheelchair or who have restricted mobility may well have missed out on many of the formative experiences of early childhood, e.g. playing in mud, sea, sand, grass. Moreover, by the time learners arrive in college, they may well have spent 16-18 years of having things done to, or for, them rather than having done things themselves. Indeed this is felt by many staff to be one of the root causes of the passivity which is evident in many of the learners on entry to college.

Experiential learning was found to be particularly effective in breaking through the passivity of the learner and helping him/her to develop the confidence to accept responsibility for his/her life. Many experiential learning situations arise naturally from being in college, for example:

- finding one's way around
- asking for help
- using a self-service refectory
- working alongside able bodied peers

Others however will form part of the teaching programme and can be undertaken individually or in groups, such as making arrangements to have a haircut or organising a disco for the students at college.

The following example illustrates the way in which one member of staff at North Nottinghamshire College applied an experiential approach to the mobility section of the curriculum.

Mobility

At the outset of the course, the students took part in practical wheelchair maintenance sessions, often going home covered in mud and oil (NB. Warn parents beforehand!). They then moved on to activities which the tutor himself wryly described as 'lung busting exercises'. The tutor concerned was well-experienced in teaching students with physical disabilities and was convinced that many of them had never explored the limits of their physical capabilities. The exercises he developed were therefore designed to encourage students to explore these limits while at the same time developing their mobility skills and self-confidence.

The activities varied from wheelchair exercises in the local vicinity (renowned for its hills) for the development of physical stamina, and the practice of road safety and kerb strategies, to 'assault courses' within a classroom using chairs and tables as obstacles. Indeed it soon proved commonplace to see students in wheelchairs lashed to a tree at the top of a grassy slope attempting to pull another student in a wheelchair up the slope whilst passers by stopped to voice their opinions which ranged from amusement to disbelief and outrage.

The students were also encouraged to undertake individual mobility projects. The following example also demonstrates the cross-curricular nature of the 'Transition to Adulthood' course, drawing together from the modules:

- Mobility – objectives
  The student will:
  - demonstrate an awareness of his/her disability and how this affects mobility;
  - be proficient in wheelchair handling;
  - be proficient in wheelchair maintenance;
  - be aware of his/her rights to mobility allowances;
  - have travelled independently using public transport.
- Basic education – objectives
  The student will have had experience of:
  - reading for information;

- planning and participating in outings and visits;
- communicating both orally and in writing with a wide variety of people and agencies;
- extending his/her general knowledge of the local community and its services.

For his project, one student decided to travel home from college using public transport. This may seem commonplace to most of us, but was a major achievement to David who had never travelled independently before. The task was broken down into its constituent parts and a great deal of time was spent in preparation for the occasion. This included:

- organising a 'pusher' to take him to the local railway station;
- liaising with British Rail to organise (a) someone to help him on to the train at Worksop and off at the next station where he had to change platforms and get onto another train, (b) someone to help him off the train at Newark;
- ordering a taxi to be waiting at Newark station to take him home;
- planning what to do in the event of an emergency, e.g. finding himself at Kings Cross, London!

Obviously this type of exercise involves an element of risk which can cause anxiety for the student, his/her parents and indeed the lecturer. However, if the student feels confident enough to tackle the activity and the project is meticulously researched and planned, its successful completion can provide a tremendous boost to a student's self-confidence with far-reaching consequences for the future. Benefits to the lecturer are less obvious as he/she may well 'age' several years while waiting for the phone call which signals the successful completion of the project!

PROJECTS

What are they?

- Activities which draw together (or combine) a number of skills under a common theme. The activities usually run over an extended period, from one week to a year.
- A means of developing a range of skills and enabling them to be applied to a particular issue.

What are they for?

Projects provide a vehicle for learners to fulfil course programme objectives in interesting and meaningful ways. Attempting to achieve objectives in a mechanical, sequential fashion has its value (see task analysis); however, many learners with special needs require variety and concrete experience around which to develop skills.

The development of core skills, now a popular theme in many courses and programmes (for example BTEC, CGLI, YTS), has led to the break away from teaching/training in specific areas or subjects. Many staff have found value in integrating work. Projects offer a vehicle for integration.

How do you use them?

In developing and implementing projects, the same processes used in programme design are employed, namely:

- Identification of needs and interests – starting with those of the learners, but remembering what you see as being in their interest.
- Setting aims and objectives – what it is the learners are to achieve and how they are to achieve it.
- Design of the project. What themes will you use? What resources will you need? What stages will it go through? How will the learner be involved?
- Implementation. In carrying out the project you need to monitor progress, identifying difficulties as they arise, and adjust the design accordingly. Careful support for learners is required so that they are neither left floundering nor overprotected. You may wish to negotiate different activities so that all gain experience of the variety of skills which the project may offer.
- Evaluation. This can include assessment of the final product, but more importantly involves exploring the skills developed and the processes experienced.

SIGNPOST

Element 7: **Technical Aids and Information Technology** – examples of projects undertaken.

EXERCISE 11. DEVELOPING A PROJECT

Small group activity

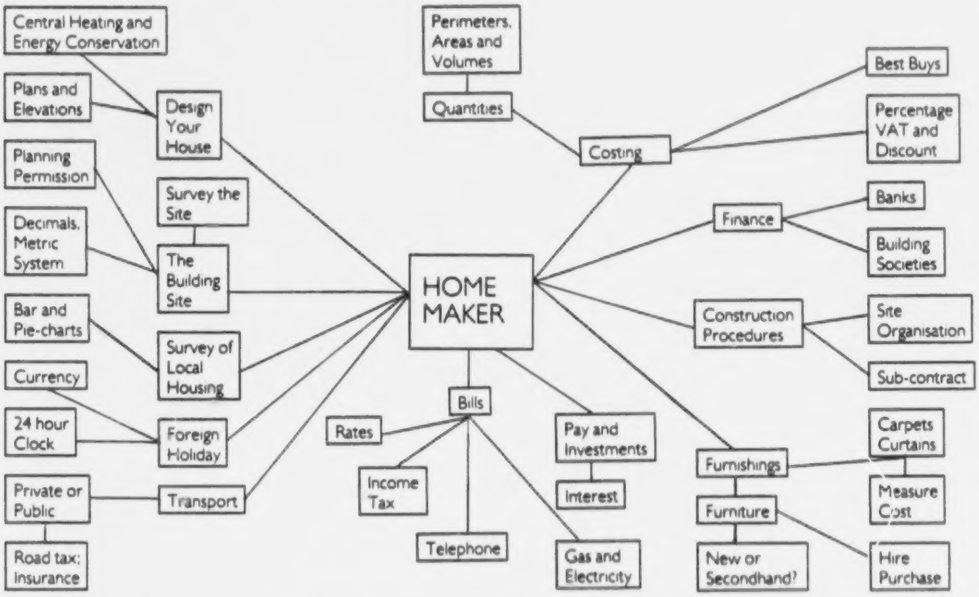
As we have suggested, project work helps to provide integration of different areas of knowledge. In this exercise the processes involved in developing project work are explored.

Methods

1. As a group decide on a theme that you want to explore. (Some ideas might include – finding a job, family tree, or going on holiday.) You may wish to select a theme from your course/training programme objectives.
2. Brainstorm the related themes. Use the web diagram sheet to see how the themes can be related.
3. Draw up a web diagram for the brainstormed ideas.
4. Identify possible projects
5. Design one each of these projects using the processes outlined above. Pay particular attention to the skills that are included and how you cater for your students/trainees with special needs.

WEB DIAGRAM 1

Below is a web diagram showing the core theme of Homemaker. Branching from it are possible related themes, in this case related to numeracy. Beneath it are a range of projects that such a theme could generate.


Central Heating and Energy Conservation
Plans and Elevations
Design Your House
Planning Permission
Survey the Site
Decimals, Metric System
The Building Site
Bar and Pie-charts
Survey of Local Housing
Currency
24 hour Clock
Foreign Holiday
Private or Public
Transport
Road tax; Insurance
Perimeters, Areas and Volumes
Quantities
Costing
Best Buys
Percentage VAT and Discount
Finance
Banks
Building Societies
HOME MAKER
Construction Procedures
Site Organisation
Sub-contract
Bills
Rates
Income Tax
Telephone
Gas and Electricity
Pay and Investments
Interest
Furnishings
Carpets Curtains
Measure Cost
Furniture
New or Secondhand?
Hire Purchase

During the year, in order to develop their experiences, skills and knowledge in the above areas, students may choose *FOUR* of the following projects:

1. Make a dolls house size model of your house.
2. Design and cost the garden.
3. Decorate a room.
4. Plan and cost the kitchen or the bathroom.
5. Plan and cost the meals for a family for a month.
6. Make a set of clothes for themselves or someone else.
7. Plan and cost a workshop for a home handyman.
8. Make a piece of furniture.

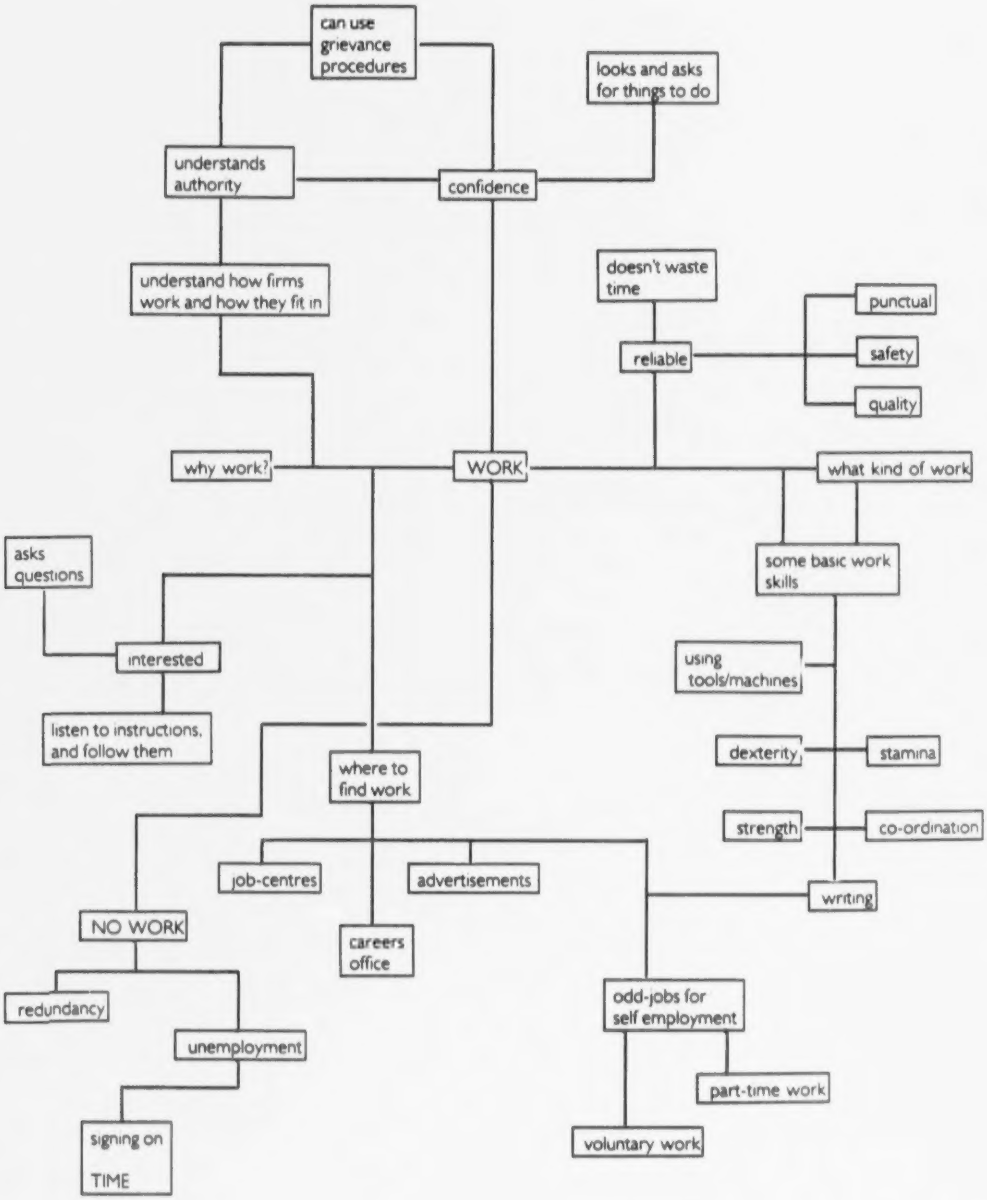
Source: *Common Core Teaching and Learning* (Longman for FEU, 1984)

WEB DIAGRAM 2

'To Work'

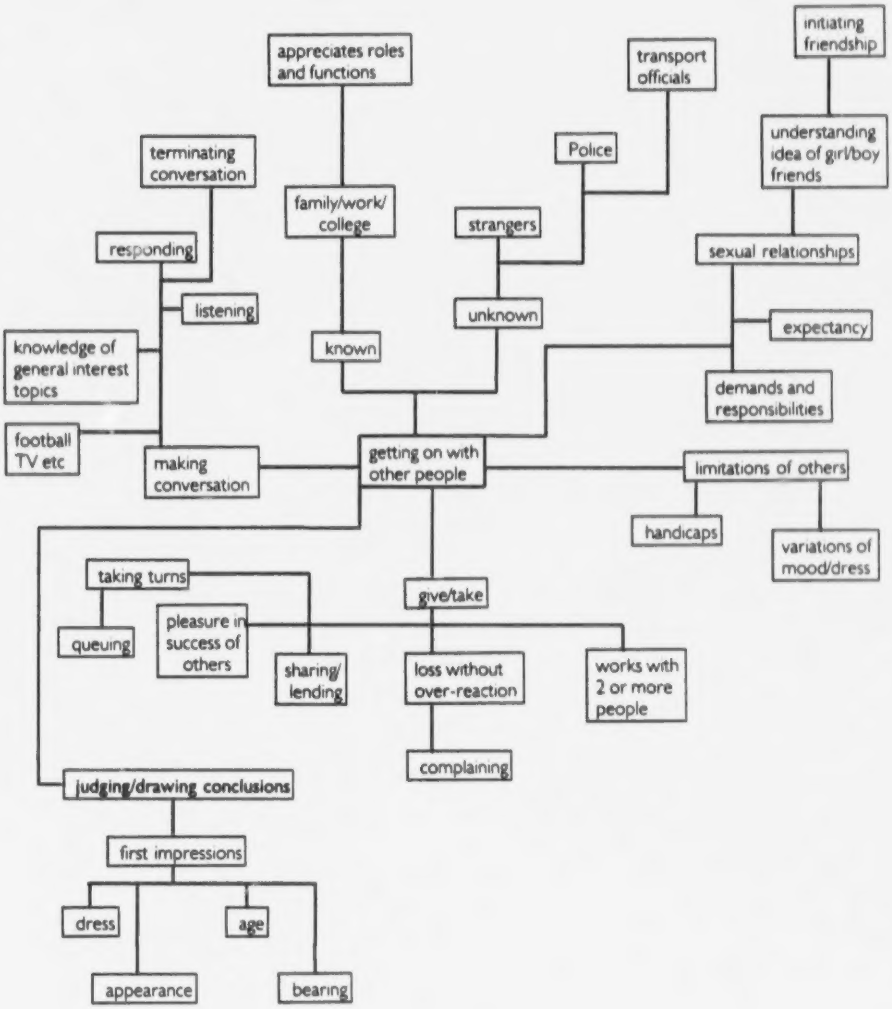
Aim:

To provide a basis from which a young person can make an informed and realistic decision with respect to his or her immediate future.


can use grievance procedures
looks and asks for things to do
understands authority
confidence
understand how firms work and how they fit in
doesn't waste time
punctual
reliable
safety
quality
why work?
WORK
what kind of work
asks questions
some basic work skills
interested
using tools/machines
listen to instructions, and follow them
dexterity
stamina
where to find work
strength
co-ordination
job-centres
advertisements
writing
NO WORK
careers office
redundancy
odd-jobs for self employment
unemployment
part-time work
signing on
TIME
voluntary work

WEB DIAGRAM 3

'To get on with other people'
Aim:
To bring about an ability to develop satisfactory personal relationships with others.


initiating friendship
appreciates roles and functions
transport officials
terminating conversation
Police
understanding idea of girl/boy friends
family/work/ college
strangers
responding
sexual relationships
listening
unknown
known
expectancy
knowledge of general interest topics
demands and responsibilities
football TV etc
making conversation
getting on with other people
limitations of others
handicaps
variations of mood/dress
taking turns
give/take
queuing
pleasure in success of others
sharing/ lending
loss without over-reaction
works with 2 or more people
complaining
judging/drawing conclusions
first impressions
dress
age
appearance
bearing

SIMULATION

What is it?

Simulation involves a range of activities which attempt to explore situations in a controlled way and which offer a form of rehearsal and reinforcement for real experiences. Participants experience events in relatively sheltered environments without having to cope with the complexities and dangers of real life.

What is it for?

- It provides opportunities for learners to develop and test out skills. Many learners with special needs may lack confidence in, or be disturbed by, new, challenging situations. By exploring them in a controlled protective way, learning can be enhanced and inhibitions removed.

- It allows for risks to be taken and mistakes made, without damaging consequences.
- Learners can become involved with a character/circumstance they might normally be unaware of or unsympathetic towards. Seeing how others might perceive them develops appropriate responses; for example, leading to self-advocacy.
- It can serve to demonstrate the complexities of decisions and procedures.

What types are there?

There are three main types of simulated activities:

- case-studies
- games
- role-play

Case-studies

Case-studies identify a real situation or a person in a situation and ask learners to explore what they would do or how they would react. Case-studies have the value of being external to the learners and therefore provide a degree of safety and non-emotional involvement in which they can be examined. For example, you might want to explore coping skills. A case-study such as: 'Richard missed the bus to his work placement this morning. What would you do?', could stimulate discussion, drawing out possible lines of action.

Games

Games provide a means of exploring activities and situations in a fairly strict, rule-bound framework. They are valuable for showing systems, causes and effects at work and help to develop concentration, teamwork and co-operation. The range is enormous, from commercially produced materials to those designed for specific groups by individual staff. Imaginative application is the key.

An example, Kim's game – displaying an array of items then removing some and asking learners to identify what is missing – can be used in a variety of ways. It can be applied to the recognition of tools for vocabulary development, and aid observation and concentration.

How could you use it with your learners?

Role-play

Role-play involves learners in acting out situations by assuming roles. They can be based on real or imagined situations and help learners to prepare for, or reflect on, real situations they encounter. Value can be gained from the learner acting as her/himself in the situation or from assuming the role of another person. The former is fairly easy for many learners and helps them in explaining their ideas and opinions and making decisions. The latter often needs considerable support in that the lack of experience of many learners constrains their imagination and understanding of how other people operate. Character and storyline may need to be made clear. As confidence grows so greater improvisation can take place.

● ● ● ● EXERCISE 12. ROLE-PLAYS

Whole group activity

Broadening experience of situations for learners with special needs in a safe environment is the essence of role-play. Understanding and experiencing the processes involved in role-play can help you to support learners when they undertake them. This exercise provides you with the opportunity to do just that.

1. Two members of the group are given the roles to play.
2. Other members of the group observe the role-play. While observing you should take note of:
   - what happens in the role-play;
   - what the participants say and how they react to each other.
3. Once the role-play has finished, discuss the action and any important pieces of dialogue.

   Role-players should contribute to this, adding their views on how the experience felt.
4. Discuss the facts, principles, causes and effects which arise from the role-play.

Guidelines for facilitators

Role-play has three major components

Briefing

1. Brief the participants carefully (they may be volunteers or selected group members). To help with this, two stimulus sheets on the person and context are provided. You may have your own. These should be given to participants and observers.
2. Allow time for the situation to be absorbed and understood. Try not to impose dialogue; rather, allow it to come from the role-players.
3. Brief the observers on what they are to look for. There are suggestions on the activity sheet. You may want to include non-verbal as well as verbal communication.

Acting out

1. Allow the scene to develop spontaneously. Do not intervene unless it seems to be drawing to a natural conclusion.
2. The timing is important; it can be difficult for individuals to sustain a role-play for more than half an hour. It is best to stop the scene once you are happy that sufficient points have been made.
3. You may wish to video the scene so that precise observations can be made afterwards.

Discussion

1. Allow the participants to come out of role (they can get very involved!). A short break is useful, say five minutes.
2. Focus the initial discussion on the immediate context, including dialogue and participants' feelings. It is important to do this first, before exploring the more general issues which emerge. Remember that you are dealing with an individual situation and immediate reactions and insights which may subsequently be lost.
3. Extend the discussion to the general issues, i.e. the significance of what happened, in order to place the role-play in a wider context.
4. Complete the discussion (if it seems appropriate) by exploring the value of the role-play. You may want to refer back to the information on this.
5. Further background information on the role-play learner characters is presented in the **Resources Section**. You may wish to refer to this material.

STIMULUS SHEET 8. ROLE-PLAY SELECTION: YTS

Manager/supervisor

You are interviewing a school-leaver who has been sent along to you by the Careers Service. You have to explain what the scheme offers, its aims and methods of working. You must also identify some of the learning needs of the interviewee and establish whether your scheme satisfies his needs.

School-leaver – Ivan – Character 11

You are a 16-year-old school-leaver who has been sent along to the Youth Training Scheme by the Careers Service to see if you would like to join it. You know nothing about YTS or the particular scheme you are sent to. You have a hearing impairment. You are also nervous and afraid to ask questions in case you look a fool. Your real interest is in catering and you would eventually like to be a chef but have no idea how to go about achieving this and have received no career guidance to help you. A friend of yours is already on the YTS scheme and this makes it more attractive.

Act out the meeting.

STIMULUS SHEET 9. ROLE-PLAY ATTENDANCE: FE/YTS

A meeting between Ronke and the Tutor/Trainer

Tutor/Trainer

You have noticed the persistent absence of Ronke from your sessions. When attending she usually arrives late, offers no explanation and disrupts activities. You ask to see her to give an account of this behaviour.

Ronke – Character 7

You are a wheelchair user. You have considerable ability and although you have missed much educational experience in the past, you find the course you are on very easy and consequently you are bored by it. The transport service provided to the establishment is erratic so the effort of getting there is sometimes too much.

Act out the meeting.

HOW DO YOU USE SIMULATION?

Here is a check-list of points to help you build an exercise.

Objectives – Keep them simple, share them with the group. Learners will benefit from knowing the general issue they are dealing with.

Learner involvement – Decide which type of involvement best suits the objectives. Role-play builds confidence, but can seem daunting to timid learners. Externalising the experience to a third party may provide greater motivation for the learner.

Realism – Participation is often encouraged when the exercise relates to experiences which the learners are likely to have. This involves choosing an appropriate situation and making any support material as similar to the real thing as possible (for example a simulated work setting or a flat).

Before and after – Simulation should always form a natural part of any ongoing course/programme. Prepare for it and use what it produces later on.

Time – Always allow enough to give learners a chance to derive the optimum benefit. Learners with special needs sometimes require a lot of preparation in understanding rules or precisely what is required.

Solutions – Always ask learners to make positive decisions on solutions regarding problems set, otherwise they may evade the issues or become side-tracked. But don't pressurise too much as a decision may be made too rapidly and be unrealistic.

Equipment and rooms – Make sure you have all that you require before you start.

Unwilling participants – Don't force such learners to join in. The observation of the exercise is itself valuable. The enjoyment experienced by others will often stimulate participation.

Reflection – debriefing – The key to the whole exercise. Learners should go over the experience in detail looking at what happened, how and why. This must also be taken into account when gauging time.

TASK ANALYSIS

What is it?

The breaking down of a task to be learnt into small steps through which the learner progresses. Progress is measured against the learner's own performance, not standards set externally or against the progress of others. This is seen as particularly benefiting learners with special needs as it emphasises their positive development rather than stressing their deficiencies. The technique forms part of the broader behaviour modification approach to training. This has been used for some time in special education as a means of modifying severe behaviour problems, using a strict regime of rewards and punishments.

What is it for?

In the context of post-16 education and training a strict regime is unlikely to work. However the use of short steps with observable progress provides the learner with confidence to continue and satisfaction from ultimately mastering a skill or achievement objective.

For example, laying bricks incorporates the tasks of:

- obtaining quantities
- mixing mortar
- handling a trowel
- applying mortar to bricks with a trowel
- laying bricks in sequence
- bonding bricks together

Many more detailed sub-tasks may also be required.

● ● ● EXERCISE 13. TASK ANALYSIS

Small group activity

Breaking down a task into its component parts may seem fairly easy. However, it involves looking carefully at the task to ensure that you cover every conceivable aspect. You cannot assume any knowledge on behalf of the individual undertaking the task.

This exercise involves you in analysing a task.

1. Choose a task which you wish to break down into small steps. You may have your own tasks, but here are some examples:
   - the basic operation of a word processor;
   - gaining access to a room at the top of a four storey building with lift for a wheelchair user (See Character 7 – Ronke);
   - answering a telephone (See Character 12 – Dana);
   - changing a car wheel (See Character 10 – Ivan).
2. Identify the steps involved. (Each group should tackle the same task.)
3. Compare your steps with those of other groups. How many steps are identified? Will the steps lead to successful completion of the task?

SIGNPOST

Element 6. **Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials** – steps in changing a wheel in 'Designing materials – an example.'

Guidelines for facilitators

1. You may need to provide a completed example of this in order to give group members some idea of the detail required. If this is the case then use the completed example in Element 6, **Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials** (Designing materials – an example).
2. Encourage the groups to tackle the activity in detail. The element of competition in both the number of steps and their success (or otherwise) in enabling the task to be carried out, can motivate the groups.

Trying the finished product out is a useful way of reinforcing the need for detail.

How do you use it?

The basic principles of task analysis are as follows:

Observation – Studying the trainee/student's current abilities/performance in a given setting.

Training – Using the information obtained from observation to devise a training programme. Task analysis fits in here.

The steps form a chain which leads to the achievement of the objective. Each step is taught through prompting, encouragement and modelling (i.e. showing how it is done then letting the learner try).

Where possible the environment should be free of distractions which may break concentration. Record progress.

Reinforcement – Provide rewards for the learner as each step is completed. (These should be agreed between you and the learner. They may consist of almost anything mutually acceptable – sweets, free time, etc.) Mistakes are ignored.

Evaluation – Progress is constantly monitored and recorded through referring back to the start-line information. A check-list of skills and the criteria for success will be needed.

Transfer and generalisation – Once the skill/task is learned, it is practised in different environments to ensure transfer of learning.

● ● ●

EXERCISE 14. PLANNING A PROGRAMME BASED ON A TASK

Small group activity

As we have suggested, a task analysis forms part of an overall programme of individualised training/education.

In this exercise you are given the opportunity to produce such a programme.

1. Plan a programme for the successful development of skills to perform a task.
2. Use the list of principles given above. Apply it to help one of the learners in tackling a task identified in Exercise 13.

SIGNPOST

If you require further guidance on the approach to use, look at the steps in Element 3. **Devising Individual Learning Programmes.**

The programme should include:

- nature of training (task analysis)
- method of training (including reinforcement)
- criteria for success
- criteria for evaluation

HOW DO YOU CHOOSE THE APPROPRIATE METHODS?

First let us re-emphasise the need for variety. A single method will not solve all your problems.

Second, a method should not be seen as synonymous with a session. As we have already seen, variety and activity are important elements within any session.

There are various approaches to selection.

● ● ● EXERCISE 15. SELECTING A METHOD

Small group activity

This exercise is designed to help you choose appropriate methods.

1. Form small groups.
2. Look at the list of methods on page 19.
3. Classify them according to the objectives that you want the learners to achieve. Use the table provided. (Note that methods can serve several purposes.)

METHODS RECORDING SHEET

Record the methods on this sheet.

When the objective is to develop skill	When the objective is to impart knowledge	When the objective is to change attitudes
e.g. Demonstration	e.g. Case-study	e.g. Case-study Role-play

4. PLANNING AND PREPARING A SESSION

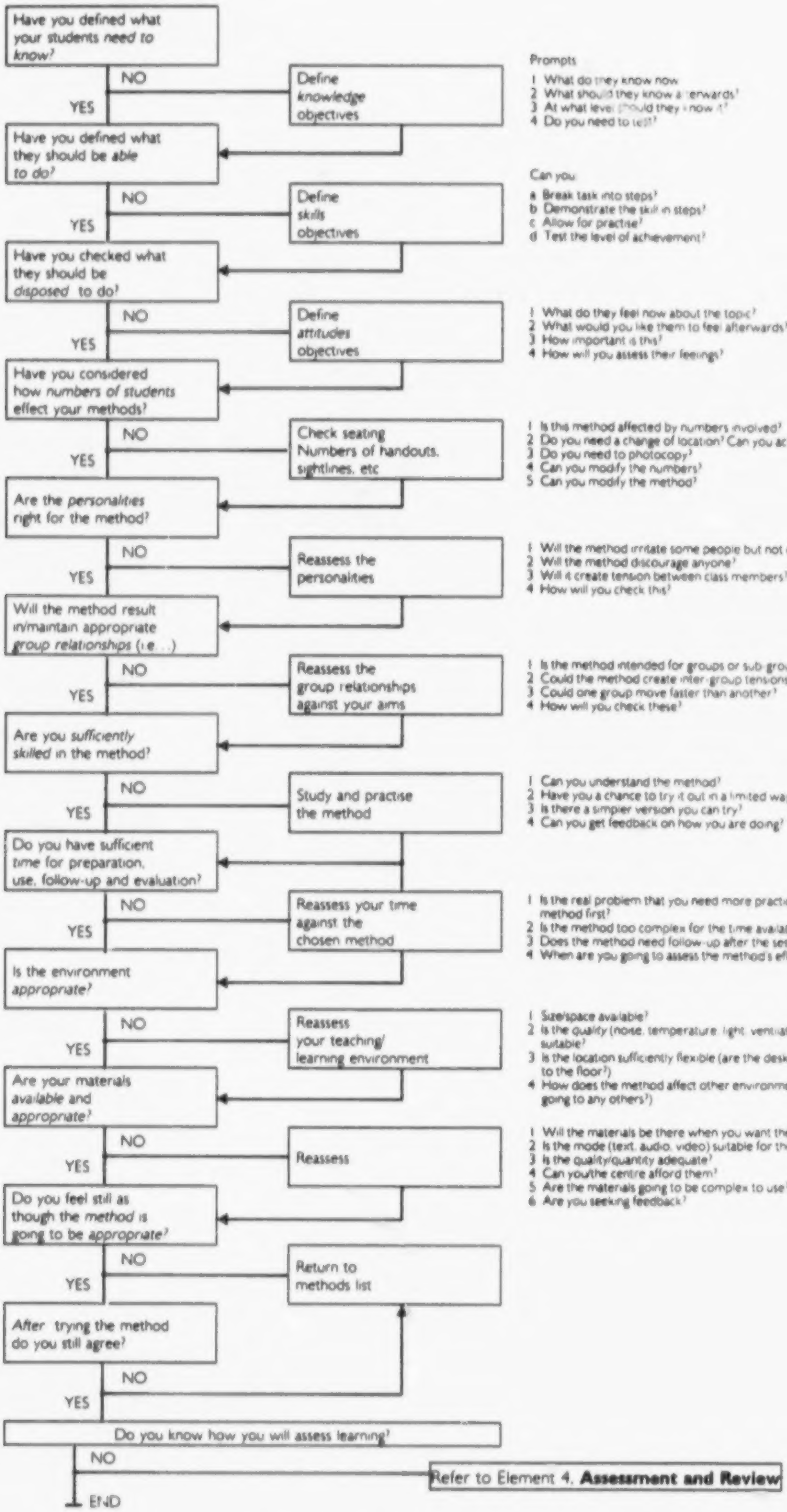
FACTORS TO CONSIDER

In planning and preparing a session you will need to consider the following:

- the needs of learners
- aims and objectives
- content
- methods
  - what you will be doing
  - what the learners will be doing
- resources
- assessment of trainees'/students' learning
- evaluation of the session

The following flow-chart shows this process and some of the decisions you will need to make in more detail.

FLOW-CHART. SESSION PLANNING


Have you defined what your students *need to know*?
NO
YES
Define *knowledge* objectives
Have you defined what they should be *able to do*?
NO
YES
Define *skills* objectives
Have you checked what they should be *disposed* to do?
NO
YES
Define *attitudes* objectives
Have you considered how *numbers of students* effect your methods?
NO
YES
Check seating Numbers of handouts, sightlines, etc
Are the *personalities* right for the method?
NO
YES
Reassess the personalities
Will the method result in/maintain appropriate *group relationships* (i.e. ...)
NO
YES
Reassess the group relationships against your aims
Are you *sufficiently skilled* in the method?
NO
YES
Study and practise the method
Do you have sufficient *time* for preparation, use, follow-up and evaluation?
NO
YES
Reassess your time against the chosen method
Is the environment *appropriate*?
NO
YES
Reassess your teaching/learning environment
Are your materials *available* and *appropriate*?
NO
YES
Reassess
Do you feel still as though the *method* is going to be *appropriate*?
NO
YES
Return to methods list
After trying the method do you still agree?
NO
YES
Do you know how you will assess learning?
NO
Refer to Element 4. **Assessment and Review**
END

Prompts

1 What do they know now
2 What should they know afterwards?
3 At what level should they know it?
4 Do you need to test?

Can you

a Break task into steps?
b Demonstrate the skill in steps?
c Allow for practise?
d Test the level of achievement?

1 What do they feel now about the topic?
2 What would you like them to feel afterwards?
3 How important is this?
4 How will you assess their feelings?

1 Is this method affected by numbers involved?
2 Do you need a change of location? Can you achieve this?
3 Do you need to photocopy?
4 Can you modify the numbers?
5 Can you modify the method?

1 Will the method irritate some people but not others?
2 Will the method discourage anyone?
3 Will it create tension between class members?
4 How will you check this?

1 Is the method intended for groups or sub-groups?
2 Could the method create inter-group tensions?
3 Could one group move faster than another?
4 How will you check these?

1 Can you understand the method?
2 Have you a chance to try it out in a limited way?
3 Is there a simpler version you can try?
4 Can you get feedback on how you are doing?

1 Is the real problem that you need more practice in the method first?
2 Is the method too complex for the time available?
3 Does the method need follow-up after the session?
4 When are you going to assess the method's effect?

1 Size/space available?
2 Is the quality (noise, temperature, light, ventilation), suitable?
3 Is the location sufficiently flexible (are the desks screwed to the floor?)
4 How does the method affect other environments (are you going to any others?)

1 Will the materials be there when you want them?
2 Is the mode (text, audio, video) suitable for the job?
3 Is the quality/quantity adequate?
4 Can you/the centre afford them?
5 Are the materials going to be complex to use?
6 Are you seeking feedback?

EXERCISE 16. PLANNING A SESSION

Individual activity

This activity provides you with the opportunity to practise session planning.

1. Choose a topic from your own area of work.
2. Plan a session using the following questions as a basis.

- What are the needs of the learners?
- What are the aims and objectives?
- What is the content?
- What methods will you employ?
- What will you be doing?
- What will the learners be doing?
- What resources will you need?
- How will you arrange the setting?
- How will you assess learning?

Small group activity

3. Form small groups of people who work on the same topic areas.
4. Compare the plans you have made.
5. Discuss the similarities and differences in the plans. Are the differences significant (refer to next page)?

WHY ARE DIFFERENCES IMPORTANT?

Trainers and tutors are all individuals. Therefore there is bound to be a variety in the way they relate to learners, in the styles they adopt, in the nature of the areas of knowledge they possess.

However, too much variety can lead to inconsistent treatment of learners; confusing experiences which distract from the fulfilment of the aims of the programme.

SIGNPOST

For further information on this see Element 2, Curriculum Training Programme Design and Evaluation Strategies.

It is important that teachers and trainers work as a team with their colleagues. Sharing a general common understanding of the programme and being consistent in the process by which its objectives can be fulfilled are vital to the learner's success. Teamwork also has great advantages in:

- sharing ideas and resources;
- supporting and encouraging the use of unfamiliar training/teaching approaches;
- encouraging the taking of risks.

SUMMARY

EVALUATION CHECK-LIST

Can you:

- Identify what is meant by active learning?
- Use active learning approaches in your teaching/training?
- Arrange the setting to provide variety of activity?
- Manage time to allow for different paces of working?
- Organise and manage the activities of individual learners in the setting?
- State the main features and value of group-work?
- Identify a range of methods available to you in delivering a course/training programme?
- Use a variety of techniques appropriate for learners with special needs?
- Specifically, use:
  - brainstorm?
  - buzz groups?
  - discussion?
  - experiential learning?
  - projects?
  - simulation?
  - task analysis?
- Select appropriate methods to use with your learners to provide activity and variety?

SIGNPOSTS

Links to other elements include the following:

SIGNPOST
Introductory Element

SIGNPOST
Element 2. **Curriculum/ Training Programme Design and Evaluation Strategies**

SIGNPOST
Element 3. **Devising Individual Learning Programmes**

SIGNPOST
Element 4. **Assessment and Review**

SIGNPOST
Element 6. **Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials**

SIGNPOST
Element 7. **Technical Aids and Information Technology**

SIGNPOST
Element 8. **Guidance and Support**

6

LEARNING SUPPORT

DESIGN AND ADAPTATION OF LEARNING MATERIALS

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INTRODUCTION

The need to provide flexible, relevant, challenging learning materials has never been greater as practitioners endeavour to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse group of learners. Providing materials to meet this wide range of needs is quite a challenge. However, the principles and skills involved are the same throughout. The difference is that you may need to design new materials or adapt existing ones to suit learners with special needs. This involves time and imagination but the pay-off can be enormous.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What are learning materials?
- What makes good learning material?
- How do you design or adapt material?

AIMS

- To analyse the nature of learning materials.
- To explore the processes of design and adaptation of learning materials.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this element you should be able to:

- state what learning materials are;
- relate current learning to past and future learning;
- differentiate between design and adaptation of materials;
- design and adapt materials to meet individual needs.

USING LEARNING MATERIALS

A STARTING POINT

All good teachers/trainers attempt to provide their learners with learning materials which:

- reflect the content of their course/training programme;
- match the learners' needs, interests and abilities;
- are appropriate for the available time, money, equipment and facilities.

Providing materials for learners with special educational/training needs amounts to the same thing. The only difference is that you may need to expand your view of what constitutes a learner's needs, interests and abilities. You may also need to look further afield to find appropriate materials.

Most readily available learning materials have been designed to cater for 'average' learners. While the same content may be used for some learners with special educational/training needs, the presentation must be in a significantly different form, e.g. a written transcript of a videotape for a learner who is visually impaired. For other learners with special needs, specially designed materials are the only answer, e.g. an illustrated pictorial sequence rather than written instructions for a learner with few literacy skills.

●●●●

EXERCISE I. WHAT ARE LEARNING MATERIALS?

Whole group activity

It is important to get a picture of what learning materials are before exploring how you can develop them.

In this activity you are given the opportunity to explore both the range and uses of learning materials.

1. Brainstorm the materials that you could use to aid learning. (There are some obvious ones – worksheets, hand-outs, video, etc.)
2. Explore the range of materials that are listed. Emphasise that almost anything can be used to aid learning. Imagination provides the only limit.

●●●

Small group activity.

3. Form small groups
4. Brainstorm the possible uses of one of the following in aiding the learning of those with special needs. You may like to add your own.

   – a pile of leaves
   – a set of bricks

The stimulus sheet gives some examples of how the two items have actually been used.

STIMULUS SHEET

Amongst others:

Leaves have been used:
– to form patterns;
– for numeracy work;
– for tactile stimulation;
– for making sounds.

Bricks have been used:
– for numeracy work;
– for construction principles;
– as musical instruments.

HOW DO LEARNING MATERIALS FIT INTO THE LEARNING PROCESS?

We have identified the following features of teaching/training and learning:

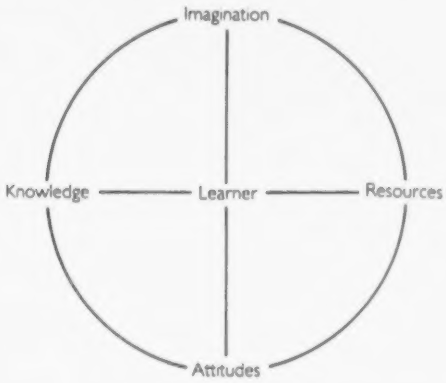
Attitudes – having a positive approach towards learners and their needs

Knowledge – of learners' needs and interests and appropriate strategies to meet them; content

Resources – using yourself, the learners and the whole environment; designing and adapting materials to meet individual needs and interests

Imagination – finding interesting ways of using knowledge and resources

These features are the 'tools' that are needed to support the learner, who should always remain at the centre of the learning process.



The learning materials derived through this process provide the practical means by which the learner is enabled to learn.

SIGNPOST

You will find more about **Teaching/Training and Learning Strategies** in the element (5) of that name. Refer first to the introduction.

● ● ● ●

EXERCISE 2. HOW DO YOU DESIGN AND ADAPT LEARNING MATERIALS?

Whole group activity

Before looking at the process in detail it is useful to gather together your own thoughts and ideas.

This activity uses a case-study to help you form your own opinion.

1. Read through the case-study below.
2. Brainstorm the factors you need to take into account to provide Richard, (Case-study 11 in the **Resources Section**) with suitable learning materials.
3. Sequence these factors into a series of steps that would form the basis of an individual learning programme.

Guidelines for facilitators

1. Provide the group with the case-study.
2. The activity requires the group to think about the *process* of developing materials not the actual materials. They may need prompting, before the brainstorm, to think along these lines.
3. The activity can be followed up by presenting the flow chart of processes.

CASE-STUDY

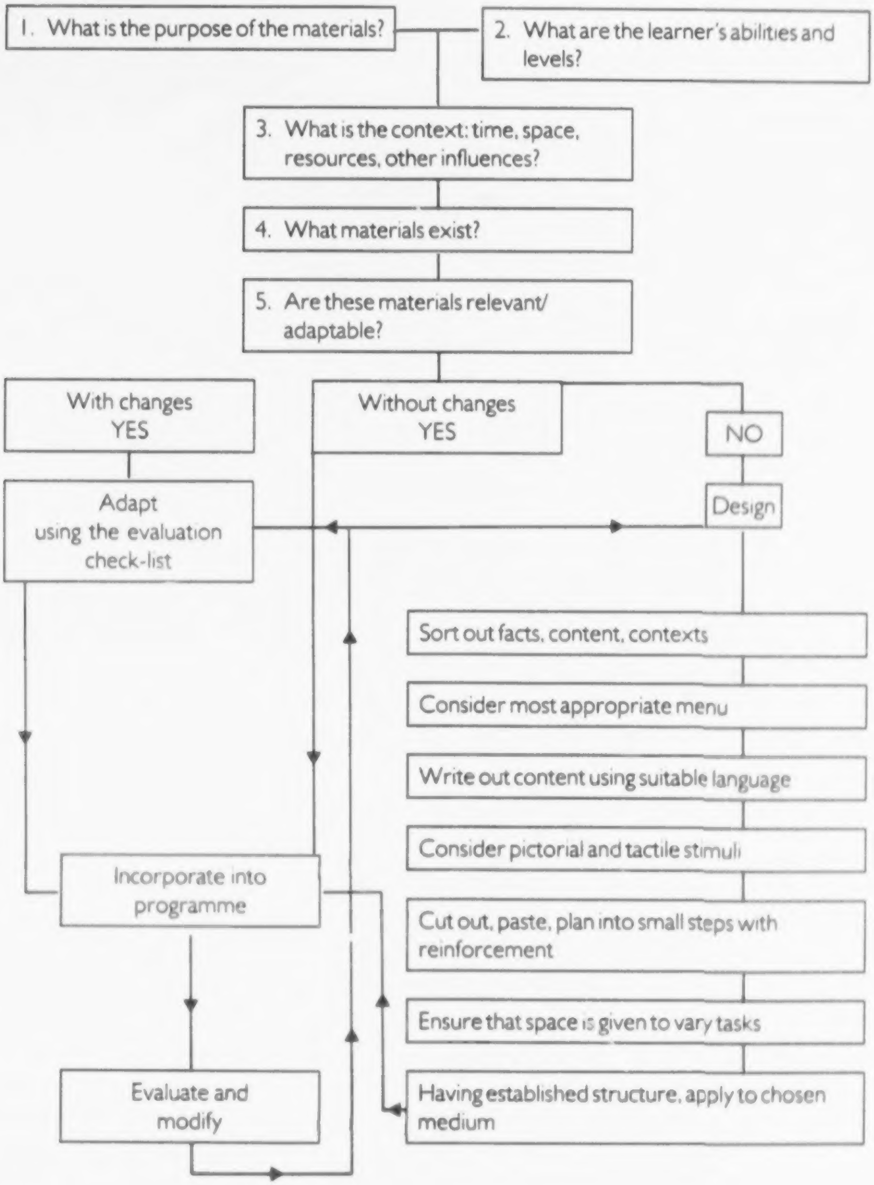
Richard has difficulty with reading and writing. He is on a YTS catering programme, but his inability to read the recipes usually provided is proving to be a major block to his progress.

What do you need to do to provide Richard with appropriate learning materials?

THE PROCESSES OF DESIGNING AND ADAPTING LEARNING MATERIALS – A FLOW CHART

In the following pages we explore the processes you have tackled in Exercise 2 in some detail.

We start with a model of the process.



1. What is the purpose of the materials?
2. What are the learner's abilities and levels?
3. What is the context: time, space, resources, other influences?
4. What materials exist?
5. Are these materials relevant/adaptable?
With changes YES
Without changes YES
NO
Adapt using the evaluation check-list
Design
Sort out facts, content, contexts
Consider most appropriate menu
Write out content using suitable language
Consider pictorial and tactile stimuli
Cut out, paste, plan into small steps with reinforcement
Ensure that space is given to vary tasks
Having established structure, apply to chosen medium
Incorporate into programme
Evaluate and modify

COMMENTS ON FLOW CHART

The five questions at the beginning of this model reflect the typical considerations made by staff when selecting material. **Materials are aids to learning not substitutes for planning**. They must be used in context.

So we need to know (Questions 1, 2 and 3 of the flow chart):

- what they are for;
- who will use them;
- and where they will be used.

Question 4 has two aspects to it. There is no point in 'reinventing the wheel' every time. There are substantial sources of material which either you or your colleagues possess, or are available commercially and through resource centres.

SIGNPOST

See the end of this element and Element 9, Sources of Help and Advice

Conversely the 'any resource will do' approach has its pitfalls. It is sometimes necessary, but never really acceptable, to grab the nearest resource and use it. If you have answered questions 1, 2 and 3 carefully, then this should not happen.

Question 5 points to the sometimes complex task of judging what is relevant and appropriate.

● ● ● EXERCISE 3. EVALUATING MATERIALS

Small group activity

Evaluating materials to suit learners with special needs can be complex. Sharing ideas with colleagues helps to form your ideas.

This exercise gives you the chance to share ideas using a selection of learning materials.

Looking at the materials provided, evaluate their appropriateness for learners with special needs. The evaluation check-list will give you guidance on how to do this.

Guidelines for facilitators

1. Collect some existing learning materials that are relevant to group members' existing work, or ask them to bring their own.
2. Focus on a particular group of learners (if there is a group common to members), or use one of the case-studies outlined in the **Resources Section.**
3. Form groups.
4. Provide them with the Evaluation check-list for Exercise 3.
5. Ask the groups to evaluate the materials' appropriateness for the learners identified.
6. Exploring the questions will give the members a reasonable guide to:

- using the materials directly or
- using them with modification or
- seeing the need to design their own.

7. The check-list provides clues to what needs to be done.

EVALUATION CHECK-LIST

To help you evaluate you may find the following check-list helpful:

Relevance

- Are the materials relevant to your:
  - purposes?
  - learners?
  - situation?

Requirements

- Do the materials assume:
  - prior skills?
  - prior knowledge?
  - prior experience?
  - prior resources?

Accessibility

- Can the materials be used by:
  - a group?
  - individuals?

Appropriateness

- How appropriate for the learners are:
  - the language?
  - the graphics?
  - the medium?

Flexibility

- Do the materials allow learners to start at different places?
- Do they cater for a variety of levels?
- Do they allow learners to move at different paces?

Facilitation	Do materials enable: – learning? – understanding? – transfer? – extension?

SOME FURTHER NOTES ON THE EVALUATION CHECK-LIST

(Use this in conjunction with the check-list.)

Relevance

If it isn't relevant, then it has to be scrapped – obvious really.

Requirements

For this section we are considering what assumptions have been made, and if they are justified.

Prior skills Do the learning materials require skills which the learners do not have? (For example, a learner with numeracy difficulties may not be able to calculate quantities. Thus she or he is not able to use, say, a cake recipe that is presented in a conventional form.) If so the temptation may be to use the learning material to teach the skill; this is not always appropriate for two main reasons:

- Those learners without the skill may be slow learners; it would be unrealistic to expect them to learn more than those who have the skill.
- The learning material may be inappropriate to teaching the skill.

To be realistic, the learner must be taught the skills separately; those who already have the skill can use this as a consolidation exercise.

Prior knowledge If there is an assumption that some information is already known and that information is not known, can it be provided?

In many instances the information need not be detailed and can be supplementary to the learning material. Its use will also help the internalisation. For example, one way of promoting self-reliance with a learner who uses a wheelchair would be in increasing wheelchair maintenance skills. You find a manual which will help, but it assumes some knowledge of mechanics. By providing those pieces of information directly necessary you can supplement the skills and promote learning of both how and why the wheelchair can be maintained.

Prior experience Perhaps the most difficult of the three 'Priors' to cater for as it implies familiarity and consistency.

It is not always possible to provide a 'real world' experience before the learner has to acquire a skill, so simple 'knowing about' may have to suffice or a simulated experience have to act as a substitute. For example:

> The decision over payment for something may include consideration of the pros and cons of hire purchase, rental and cash. The skills of percentage and interest calculation, etc. can still be taught.

Prior resources

- Are the required resources available:
  - in house?
  - on hire?
  - on loan?
- Can they be made?
- If not, then the medium must be reconsidered.
- If the resource is to be borrowed then where else can it be used during the time it is available? This may be a purely financial consideration, but it will help requisition orders.

Accessibility

We are looking at:

- how you do it;
- levels of writing;
- teaching and teacher/trainer – learner relationships and peer relationships.

Accessibility for a group If a learning material is generally inaccessible then it should not be used as it will only confuse or reinforce a sense of failure, e.g. GCSE students reading degree level papers for 'background reading'.

Accessibility for an individual Here we are talking about the direct sensory/cognitive effects of a disability. If an individual, alone or in a group, cannot use learning material how can it be supplemented or redesigned to be accessible? A learner with visual impairment, a learner with low literacy, or one who has difficulty with print may be helped by using an audio cassette. Her or his written answers may be represented in pictorial form.

Appropriateness

A similar area to access, looks more at specific properties of the learning material.

Language

- Learners may be alienated by the use of language at an inappropriate level.
- If the language level is too high learners will concentrate on language rather than on the learning objective.
- If the level is too low then learners may feel patronised.
- The key process here is to simplify the language initially, giving concise instruction/information with expansion if required for learners who want more background information.

Graphics Concerned with visual presentation, layout, size of print, colour, etc.

The temptation is often to get as much information as possible into the learning material, resulting in the learners not being able 'to see the wood for the trees'.

Examples:

- Newsprint or type is difficult for many people to read so enlarge if possible or handwrite.
- A general point of good practice is to photocopy OHPs (handwritten preferably); learners can associate the layout and keywords with the lesson, which helps recall.
- Drawings, artistic and technical, are easily overcomplicated, so isolate the specific part of the drawings required and enlarge. The complete drawing can then be provided to give an overview.
- Effective use of colour can highlight written or drawn graphics and help learning by breaking down large pieces of work.

Medium This is largely concerned with the sensory/physical effects of disability. If a learner is not likely to respond to a given medium first, consider if the medium itself is being used to its full potential, i.e. subtitles on video for hearing impaired students, sound effects or audio cassettes if attention span is short, illustrations on written sheets. If the medium itself is not adaptable, another medium altogether should be used.

Flexibility

Mixed ability teaching makes a great many demands on both you and the learners. Incorporating special needs learners increases those demands considerably (having got this far, you've probably realised that); this section really attempts to assess the suitability of the learning material for mixed ability teaching/training/learning.

Access points For a free-standing short unit of material this is not so important, but for larger learning material it is crucial. Can learners select the areas of the learning material that they want to approach, and work on these in isolation (assuming they have prior skills and knowledge)? If not, can the learning material be broken down into free-standing modules to accommodate this? Can the learning be approached at different levels for different ability (or even motivation) levels?

A good example is this package, which could have been written as a serialised book where you (the learner) started at the beginning and finished at the end.

Because everyone who uses this package will have different skills, knowledge and experience, it has been modularised so that you can work on the areas you want to and construct your own learning programme level.

It is probably true to say that everyone who uses a learning material will learn a different amount, and that the more varied the abilities, the more varied the amount of learning. The job of the learning material is to cater for all abilities and to promote as much learning as possible for all of them.

You should be flexible in encouraging a range of responses from learners in order for them to work from their particular strengths.

Facilitation

Questions to ask: this is really a final check on the learning materials to make sure they are doing all the things they are meant to.

Learning

- Does the learning material facilitate learning?
- If not, back to the drawing board.
- If it did before adaptation, where did it stop?

Understanding

- Does the learning material facilitate understanding?
- If not, why not?
- Redraft.
- Simplify.
- Expand.
- Explore other media, as covered above.

Transferability

- Are the skills learnt transferable?
- A debrief session may be necessary to highlight this aspect.

Extension

- Where does the learning lead to?
- There should be room for follow-up in any piece of learning. The skill is in finding it.

DESIGNING MATERIALS – AN EXAMPLE

If you think the existing materials are not appropriate then you will need to design your own.

Refer back to the process flow chart on Page 5.

Here you see a sequence for designing materials. You will notice that the sequence suggests getting your ideas and materials together *first* before you apply them to the medium you have chosen. Trying to battle with ideas and means of production at the same time can pose great difficulties – unless you are particularly skilled. For us lesser mortals the step-by-step approach ensures nothing is left out.

The process involves sorting out the key features of content and context:

- deciding what is the purpose of the materials. Then:
  - analysing the sequence and writing in appropriate language;
  - choosing the medium;
  - making the materials;
  - applying the materials.

For example, *Changing a car wheel*:

Analyse the sequence and write in appropriate language.

- engage handbrake
- find jack and spare wheel
- remove cover to securing belts

SIGNPOST
Task analysis may be useful here. See Element 5, **Training/Teaching and Learning Strategies.**

- loosen wheelnuts (brace)
- check wheels
- find jacking point
- lift car on the jack
- remove wheel and put on spare
- tighten nuts (hand)
- lower jack
- tighten nuts (brace)
- replace cover
- replace jack and wheel.

EXERCISE 4. USING SIMPLE LANGUAGE

Individual activity

It is very easy to confuse or 'lose' people by the use of long sentences and complicated words. Some learners with special needs have particular difficulty with language.

This activity provides you with the opportunity to develop your use of appropriately simple language.

1. Look at the list of phrases and words provided.
2. Find words to express them more simply.
3. Compare the answers.

Guidelines for facilitators.

1. Provide group members with the Word-list (overleaf).
2. Give them the time to complete it.
3. Record answers (including alternatives).
4. Use the suggested answers (below) to consolidate those already recorded.

WORD LIST

Here is a list of words/terms. Find ways of expressing them in simpler language.

1. arrive at a decision
2. in spite of the fact that
3. make an attempt to
4. in the vicinity of
5. a proportion of
6. have been shown to be
7. at that point in time
8. in most cases
9. bring to a conclusion.
10. a small number of

a. accelerate
b. approximately
c. commence
d. consequently
e. demonstrate
f. facilitate
g. initiate
h. locate
i. nevertheless
j. opportunity
k. principal
l. proportion
m. terminate

USING SIMPLE LANGUAGE – SOME SUGGESTED ANSWERS

1. decide
2. although
3. try
4. near
5. some
6. are
7. then
8. usually
9. finish
10. few

a. speed up
b. about
c. begin
d. so
e. show
f. help
g. start

h. find
i. but
j. chance
k. main
l. part
m. end

Choose medium

Keeping in mind the example of changing a car wheel (introduced on Page 9), variety and reinforcement of the written word can be provided by a series of still photographs of each step of the activity. The sequence can be reinforced by either a script to be read out and/or an audio tape. (The latter may need pauses in it to allow for different paces of learning.) A video of the whole sequence will reinforce the combination of steps.

EXERCISE 5. CHOOSING THE MEDIUM

Individual activity

Choosing the right form of presentation is very important for learners. A medium which is appropriate to their capabilities will promote learning, but one which is either too complex or too simple is likely to be off-putting.

This activity examines your perceptions of appropriate media and how to relate them to individual needs.

Show (by a tick or ticks) which medium or combination of media you would use for the following:

	Written	Still	Moving	Sound	Activities
Changing a wheel					
Imagining the feelings of others					
Presenting a series of connected facts					

Now try it again for:

- a learner with visual impairment;
- a student with literacy difficulites.

Discuss your choices in groups. How do they vary?

Guidelines for facilitators

1. You may need multiple copies of this sheet to allow group members to develop their ideas.
2. The supplementary sheet focuses on the needs of learners rather than the content.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

There are no 'right' answers to this exercise. The point is to note how the needs of the learner influence your choice.

A check-list to use when deciding on choice of medium

Note down any practical difficulties your learners might face when using any of the following media.

	Learner 1	Learner 2	Learner 3
Written text			
Slides			
Audio tape			
Video			
Tools			
Activities			
Other e.g. tactile			

Having chosen the medium (continuing the example of changing a wheel), you then need to produce and/or acquire the materials which will form the framework for your finished piece. Remember to use language which suits the learners.

Make materials – using decisions made above

Once you have collected all your resources together put them into an appropriate sequence. This can be done by using the storyboard approach used in film-making.

- Cut out your resources
- Put them in sequence
- Ensure there is reinforcement at various stages
- Use small steps
- Vary the image/experience.

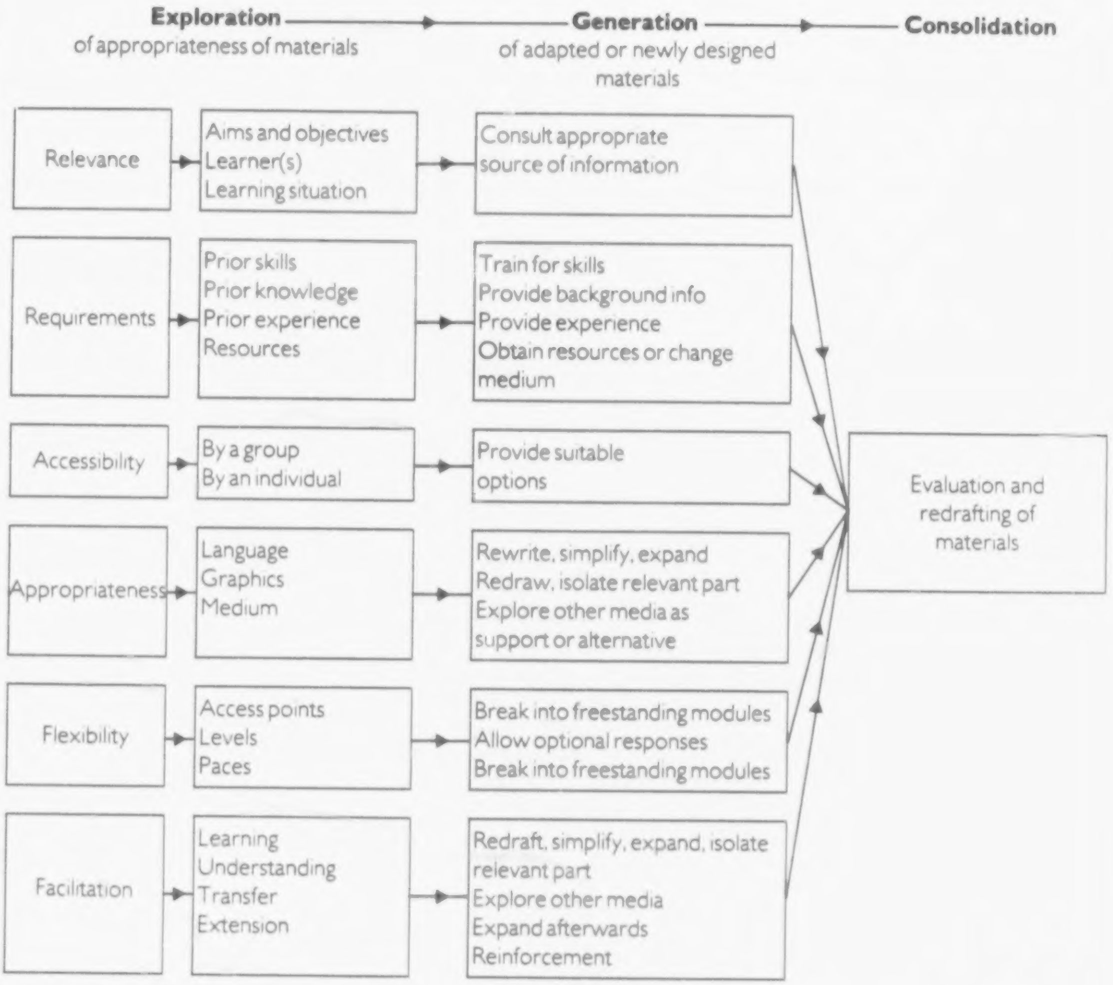
Once you are satisfied with this apply it to the medium you have chosen.

Apply materials

You will need to test their value. In this case the final test will be if the wheel stays on! Less drastic tests such as naming parts, describing the sequence, what to do if the nuts are too tight, will all help.

Throughout this exploration of design and adaptation of materials we have used a check-list. Here we present this in its full form.

CHECK-LIST. RRAFF



Exploration of appropriateness of materials		**Generation** of adapted or newly designed materials	**Consolidation**
Relevance	Aims and objectives Learner(s) Learning situation	Consult appropriate source of information	Evaluation and redrafting of materials
Requirements	Prior skills Prior knowledge Prior experience Resources	Train for skills Provide background info Provide experience Obtain resources or change medium	
Accessibility	By a group By an individual	Provide suitable options	
Appropriateness	Language Graphics Medium	Rewrite, simplify, expand Redraw, isolate relevant part Explore other media as support or alternative	
Flexibility	Access points Levels Paces	Break into freestanding modules Allow optional responses Break into freestanding modules	
Facilitation	Learning Understanding Transfer Extension	Redraft, simplify, expand, isolate relevant part Explore other media Expand afterwards Reinforcement	

● EXERCISE 6. APPLYING THE DESIGN PROCESS

Individual activity

Having explored the various aspects of design, this activity now draws everything together. In it you are asked to apply the ideas (given in the previous pages) to designing materials for your learners.

● ● ●

Small group activity

1. Apply the design process *either* to some materials that you wish to develop for your learners *or* develop materials for:

   – a learner with visual impairment;
   – a learner with literacy difficulties;
   – a learner who uses a wheelchair;

   in your area of work.

Guidelines for facilitators

1. This activity is suited to a materials development workshop. The full activity may not be completed within a single session. It can be used over a series of sessions.
2. It is important to allow time for ideas to develop.
3. The rate of production may be slow. Encourage participants in the workshop to keep to simple approaches and materials. Making things over complex is likely to deter both participants and the learners themselves.

SUMMARY

Explore how the materials suit the learners.

Generate adaptation of newly designed materials.

Consolidate by testing them out, evaluating and fine tuning.

It is important to make use of the range of advice, guidance and support that is available to you.

This can be:

technical – through resources units;
commercial – through professional packages;
training/educational – through colleagues;
individual – through consulting learners.

(Refer to **Resources Section**)

A final reminder

Learning materials provide part of the support which learners with special needs require. They are not a substitute for appropriate planning and organisation. They do enable learners to be active and take responsibility for their own learning (with your guidance).

EVALUATION CHECK-LIST

Can you:

- describe what is meant by learning materials?
- do you understand how learning materials fit into the development of learning?
- what main questions do you need to ask in selecting materials?
- what factors do you need to take into account when making an initial evaluation of learning materials?
- can you differentiate between design and adaptation of materials?
- how do you adapt materials?
- what is the process for designing materials?
- do you know how to select the appropriate medium?
- can you use the right language?
- how do you evaluate the material you have designed?

SIGNPOSTS

Links to other elements include the following:

SIGNPOST

Element 5. **Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies**

SIGNPOST

Element 9. **Sources of Help and Advice**

7

LEARNING SUPPORT

TECHNICAL AIDS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

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- How do you identify and employ appropriate technical aids? 3
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INTRODUCTION

Some learners with special needs require additional or modified equipment to gain access to, and to participate in, learning programmes. Examples include aids to communication and attachments to tools or machinery. The growth of awareness in this area together with developments in technology have combined to provide a variety of specialist resources for such learners. Teachers and trainers should be aware of these developments, but equally, knowing where and how to get advice is also vital. Computer-assisted learning packages have opened up many possibilities for individualising learning materials but there are dangers of them being used as substitutes for teaching/ training. These packages should be used to support learning. Being able to judge their value and choose appropriately, are essential skills.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What are technical aids?
- How do you identify and employ appropriate technical aids?
- What is information technology?
- What is information technology for?
- What is its use/value for learners with special needs?
- How do you use CAL?
- How do you recognise good quality CAL?

AIMS

- To explore the nature and type of technical aids.
- To examine their availability and appropriate usage.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this element you should be able to:

- show what technical aids are;
- include the use of technical aids by learners in your course/training programme;
- show how technical aids can help learners with special needs to gain access and participate;
- identify the main uses of information technology in training/teaching;
- judge and choose appropriate CAL packages to meet special needs;
- use two strategies for the application of CAL in your training/teaching situation.

TECHNICAL AIDS

WHAT ARE TECHNICAL AIDS?

Technical aids is a broad term which covers the whole range of equipment which can enable learners with special needs to gain access to, and participate in, a course/training programme.

In Element 6, **Design and Adaptation of Learning Materials**, we identified alternative ways of presenting information and stimulating active learning. For some learners those may not be enough; their special needs may be beyond such materials. Specialised technical aids can provide the extra support which learners need.

Examples

For a learner with impaired hearing, a sound loop system could be valuable. A learner with cerebral palsy lacking fine motor skills could be aided by a concept keyboard.

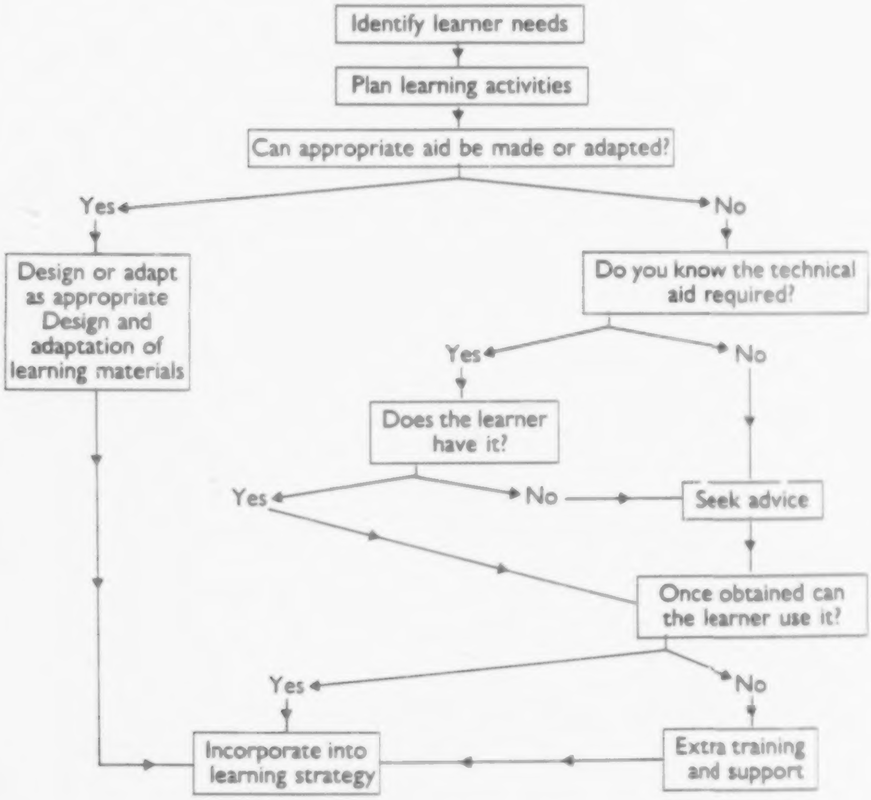
The range of aids is so vast that it is impossible to describe here. Indeed it would be inappropriate, because in suiting an individual need it is vital that the exact match is made.

HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY AND EMPLOY APPROPRIATE TECHNICAL AIDS?

For the learners, technical aids may be a necessary part of their participation in all aspects of a course/training programme. It is important for you to remember, however, that they are *aids*, and they are simply there to support learning, not to represent an end in themselves; as such they need to be taken into account during the planning and delivery of the learning process as with other resources.

FLOW CHART

The following flow diagram shows the issues which you need to take into account


Identify learner needs
Plan learning activities
Can appropriate aid be made or adapted?
Yes
No
Design or adapt as appropriate Design and adaptation of learning materials
Do you know the technical aid required?
Yes
No
Does the learner have it?
Yes
No
Seek advice
Once obtained can the learner use it?
Yes
No
Incorporate into learning strategy
Extra training and support

SIGNPOST
Element 9. **Sources of Help and Advice**

This process follows the same pattern as for the use of learning materials. It also specifies that if you cannot cater for the particular needs yourself you should seek advice from elsewhere. Don't be stuck – there are limits to what you can do.

SIGNPOST
References and bibliography in Element 9.

WHAT IS I.T. FOR?

In education and training, information technology (IT) is being used in a number of ways. Two have particular relevance.

- **Computer-managed learning** or CML refers to the use of information technology to manage the whole learning process. Elements such as student records, assessments, profiles, course/programme information can all be collected and applied using fairly simple hardware and software.
- **Computer-assisted learning** or CAL describes the use of computer systems to assist directly in the learning process. It is generally used to cover all uses of computers in learning (apart from CML). Some programs simply imitate traditional techniques, e.g. drill and practice, tutorial. Others, such as simulation and problem solving, are sometimes better suited to computers.

To save confusion we use CAL although there are many related terms which amount to much the same thing:

	ASSISTED	Instruction
	Aided	LEARNING
COMPUTER	Based	Education
		Training
	Enhanced	Teaching

(from *Information Technology Support Systems for Education and Training* FEU, 1987).

WHAT IS I.T.'S USE/VALUE FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS?

We focus attention here on CAL. Again it must be emphasised that information technology offers another means of support for learners. It provides a range of alternative or substitute strategies for learning but it still needs to be managed and incorporated into the overall planning and delivery of a course/training programme.

The evidence (*Information Technology and Work Preparation courses for Slow Learners in Further Education Colleges* CET, 1987) suggests that using microcomputers with learners with special needs enhances:

- motivation
- concentration
- reinforcement
- the creation of a good working atmosphere
- group work
- basic skills work
- responsibility for learning including taking initiative

SIGNPOST
In Element 5. **Training/Teaching and Learning Strategies**, and Element 3. **Devising Individual Learning Programmes**, it is shown that many of the above features sometimes present difficulties when working with learners with special needs.

These features of learning are enhanced because of the novel and interactive nature of good quality CAL packages, which enable learners to become involved directly with their own learning.

Above all, these packages capture the imagination of many learners, who may have failed or been failed through using other approaches.

HOW DO YOU USE CAL?

The range of CAL packages is so vast that the possible uses are huge. Much depends on what packages you have access to and what type of hardware you are able to use. These are largely resource issues, not dealt with in detail here. Instead, we focus on two broad strategies for use.

1. LEARNING PARTICULAR SKILLS OR KNOWLEDGE

This involves using a CAL package as an imitator or substitute for traditional teaching/training techniques. Many packages provide drills and skills activities, which enable learners to work at their own pace to gain a full knowledge of (say) vocabulary or number. Keyboard skills can be learnt directly (or indeed indirectly), while simulation and problem solving packages provide a focus for group work. Project work can engage the learner in using word processing and database packages. Experience in this is useful in itself.

In each of these examples other resources could be used to achieve the same ends. In this sense CAL is to be seen as another resource, an alternative way of stimulating learning and providing access to a wider curriculum/training programme. It is important to choose that resource which best suits the individual need of the learner. The perils and frustrations of using a keyboard can impede progress. Conversely, the freedom offered by this different medium can be a strong motivation.

2. INTEGRATED LEARNING

This involves using information technology to enhance the learning of a group. Here are some examples from the CET project report.

Example 1. Making a newspaper

'Desktop publishing allows a group of students with learning difficulties to produce a college or a course newspaper. This could not be achieved with anything like the success using other resources; the end result, especially when a desktop publishing program is used together with graphics packages, is so stunning as to provide a very powerful new motivation in the students.

Moreover, this motivation produces several surprising results.

First, the programs themselves are usually complex and were seen at the start of the project as being beyond the intellectual range of the students being trained. This proved not to be the case – within each of the ten groups, a sub-set of students worked their way through the programs successfully and acted as editors or layout artists for the entire group. Since normal word processing files can be fed into the program system disk, and since each student could easily master a word processor, each student could contribute to the final result.

Second, the students were able to operate a genuine working unit, taking the crucial decisions themselves in editorial meetings. Deadlines were set and those behind in their work would be persuaded by other students to work harder. The group would decide which articles should be accepted, and which rejected. The group would decide on who should do each job – they were able, within an assignment such as this, to realise each other's strengths and weaknesses and capitalise on this new understanding.

Each of the ten colleges involved eventually used desktop publishing software and each intends to use it systematically in the future. One college has renamed the Core Area of Communications "The Newspaper" since they are so convinced that this is the most effective means of dealing with the communications objectives.'

Example 2. Work experience projects

'Some of the colleges run intensive work experience projects lasting up to several weeks. Two of these merit individual mention – the Retail Option at Derby College and the Crafty Students of Warminster project at Trowbridge College.

The Derby project was focused on the making and selling of wooden items such as garden benches, tables and bird tables. Previously, the staff had dealt with most of the servicing aspects of the work and had been in charge of ordering the materials; dealing with orders for purchase; sales, etc.

Using the computer, the students were able to be far more heavily involved in the complete cycle of small business operation. Using spreadsheets, they were able to itemise monthly figures on purchases and sales. Using databases, they were able to enter orders and to pinpoint the items needed to be made at a particular time. Using a word processor, they were able to deal with letters to customers.

In each of these cases, the work was significantly enhanced. Without the software packages the students would not have been able to handle information retrieval involved in this side of the work.

The lecturers' conclusion at Derby was clear – the students were able to feel far more involved in the whole process of business and not restricted to their normal role of factory hand. This greater involvement led in turn to a greater sense of pride in the overall operation and a much more motivated and professional performance.

The Trowbridge project involved the setting up of a small firm, "The Crafty Students of Warminster", which was based in an annexe of Trowbridge College in the nearby town of Warminster. Here, the principles adopted at Derby were extended and the uses of IT even more comprehensive.

It was announced to the students that the course was having an "Industrial Fortnight" and that this would centre on the making, painting and selling of garden gnomes. To do this, the course team had ordered moulds for the purpose and had been given permission to take over the Warminster Annexe. The students were told to apply for jobs at the 'factory' and to write out their CVs and letter of application on a word processor. The jobs included factory workers, office workers and canteen workers.

Having applied for these jobs, each student was interviewed by the local careers officer and this was videoed and analysed afterwards.

During the project itself, the computer was used for:

- stocktaking: using spreadsheets as at Derby
- orders: using databases as at Derby
- letters to customers: using word processors
- factory notices: using desktop publishing programs
- time sheets: using spreadsheets
- a factory news-sheet: using desktop publishing programs

The project – timed in the run-up to Christmas – was extremely successful. The gnomes were sold at local market stalls and the fortnight resulted in a significant profit. Because of the success of the project, the work continued sporadically throughout the year with the "company" diversifying into other garden-related items such as paving stones.

As at Derby the lecturers felt that the IT input was of the greatest importance since it "lifted" the experience of the project. It helped create an atmosphere which was more realistic and more tied to the actual working practices of a small company.

In this way, the curriculum was not determined by the use of the computer – but it was immeasurably enhanced.'

In each of these examples individual skills are developed, but they are expanded, related and applied to a much broader set of processes and outcomes.

HOW DO YOU RECOGNISE GOOD QUALITY CAL?

There are two answers to this question.

1. There is a growing amount of information available on software that has been used successfully with learners with special needs. Agencies such as the National Council for Educational Technology (NCET), Special Education Microelectronics Education Resource Centres (SEMERCs) and FEU all publish lists of appropriate software (see **References and Bibliography** in Element 9). However, two major problems exist with these:

   - the amount of software being developed is considerable, thus such lists may quickly become out of date;

- it is not always possible to judge from the description if a piece of software will suit the particular needs of an individual learner. (Indeed learners may develop unexpected skills as a result, which were not initially objectives of using the software.)

2. Find out for yourself.

The following is a do-it-yourself kit to help you judge CAL packages.

Microcomputers are becoming increasingly simple to use. Trying out CAL programs helps you to learn and makes you more able to support your own learners. Expertise with technology is also growing, so you may have colleagues who can assist if you don't feel proficient yourself. However, remember that you will ultimately have to include the package in your course/training programme and use it with learners. Above all – don't panic. (Your machine will not blow up! The worst that can happen is that the program will 'freeze' and the easiest way to deal with this is to remove the disk from the drive, switch everything off and start again. You will not have broken the machine.)

Three main features of any package need to be looked at:

- Does it suit the needs and interests of the learners and yourself? Considerations here include:
  - appropriateness of aims and objectives
  - clarity of supporting material (documentation)
  - suitability for age (16+) and ability level
  - type of learning strategy used in package
  - extent of learner involvement (creating/responding)
- Does it work? Considerations here include:
  - clarity of the screen display
  - appropriateness of images (graphics)
  - pace and timing of displays
  - flexibility
  - provision of on-screen help
  - 'crash potential' – can it be made to fail?
- What equipment can it be used with? Considerations here include:
  - capability of being used with specific adaptations (say, for those with poor motor skills)
  - possibility of getting printed copy of work
  - suitability for use with equipment you have

EXERCISE 1. ASSESSING COMPUTER PROGRAMS TO AID LEARNING

Small group activity

As with any other learning aid, it is important to judge the value of computer packages. This activity provides a detailed exploration of CAL packages.

Guidelines for facilitators

1. For this activity you will need appropriate equipment and a range of CAL packages to try out.
2. If you use it over several sessions then you can build up a bank of questionnaires which in themselves become a useful resource.
3. Participants should work through the questionnaire to test out each package.
4. Further explanation of the questions is to be found in the **Assessment criteria** (Page 11).

Methods

Use the following Program Assessment Questionnaire.

Test out a software package by answering the questions posed. (If you require further explanation of any of the questions, read the Assessment Criteria Rationale appended.)

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of program ________________________________

1. Description of program/package.

2. Are the aims and objectives of the program stated? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐
State

3. Is the accompanying documentation provided? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐
4. Were the skill areas clearly stated in the documentation? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐
5. Was the documentation adequate for your needs? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐
How does it need modifying?

6. Are the tasks to be performed clearly stated in the documentation? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐
Comment.

7. Are complementary materials provided? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐
Comment

8. Are the prior attainment levels to enable the learner to use the program stated? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐
Comment

9. Are there suggestions for associated activities to support the program? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐
10. How would you classify the program/package in terms of learning strategy?
Tick one or more of the following:
- Drill and practice ☐
- Word processing ☐
- Simulation ☐
- Framework program ☐
- Vocabulary/language development ☐
- Database ☐
- Game program ☐
- Numeracy ☐
- Text manipulation ☐
- Other ☐

Additional comments

11. Was the screen display easy to read? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐

If no, why was this so?

12. Was the program easy to use? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐

If no, why?

13. Is the program crashproof, i.e. can it be made to fail? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐

If not, why?

14. Are the graphic representations appropriate? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐

Comments

15. Can learners recall instructions/menu at any time throughout the use of the program? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐

16. Does the learner control the timing of frame presentations? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐

Comment

17. Did the program provide a sufficiently wide range of options for your learners' needs at varying ability levels? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐

Comment

18. Did the program provide sufficient flexibility for your requirement? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐

Comment

19. Is the program accurate in the presentation of its concepts? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐

Comment

20. Is the language level used within the program appropriate to the ability level? **Y** ☐ **N** ☐

Comment

21. Does the program accept variations in learner response? Y ☐ N ☐

22. Are simple procedures available for modifying the program? Y ☐ N ☐

23. Is a facility provided for use of a peripheral? Y ☐ N ☐

Please state peripheral:

24. Are results of responses recorded by the program? Y ☐ N ☐

If so, how?

25. Is the program printer dependent? Y ☐ N ☐

State make of printer

26. Would the program benefit from printer dependency? Y ☐ N ☐

27. How do you consider the program can best be used?

- Teacher/trainer demonstration
- Individual learner
- Teacher/trainer and learner together
- Pairs/small groups
- Other ____________

28. Would the program blend into existing activities? Y ☐ N ☐

Why?

29. Were the aims and objectives achieved (if stated)? Y ☐ N ☐

How?

30. Was the program better than alternative (non-electronic) ways of achieving the same objective? Y ☐ N ☐

Why?

31. Do you consider the program to be of value to 16+ learners with special needs (consider alternative benefits)? Y ☐ N ☐

Why?

32. Further comments

Source of questionnaire – Blackpool and the Fylde College

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Field testing has suggested the need for explanation of selected points – these follow below.

Aims and objectives of program/package

(The numbering of points corelates with those of the Program Assessment Questionnaire. Not all numbers are represented.)

2a. **State the aim(s) of the program.**

2b. **State the specific objectives relevant to the skill area.**

Stated aims and objectives should enable you to make informed decisions on whether, and how, to use a program with learners. A general description of the program content can be misleading and it is desirable that aims and objectives are clearly stated. Question also whether the objectives are achievable through the use of a particular item of software.

2c. **Attempt to identify alternative learning objectives.**

In special education one often finds that a program designed for one purpose turns out to be more useful for a skill area not specified. A program designed to reinforce concepts of space, direction and estimation may also present itself as a powerful aid to group interaction, development of group co-operation and language development.

3–7. **Documentation in support of program/package**

Off-screen documentation

The documentation accompanying a program should state the educational aim(s) and objectives, state simply and clearly the tasks to be performed by the learner and explain how these are to be accomplished. It should suggest and preferably provide complementary materials and propose a variety of associated activities. It should also indicate what prior attainment levels are required.

On-screen documentation

For learners with special educational needs, minimal text with clear layout and, possibly, enlarged characters is most desirable. Instructions should be pitched at the same level as the main body of the program to enable learners complete independence of access and operation. The learner should be able to recall instructions with a single key input to counteract short-term memory impairment.

10. **Learning stategy adopted by program/package**

10(a). **Drill and practice**

Programs are usually designed to be used by individual learners. The learner sits at the keyboard, waits for a question, types her/his response and thus reputedly improves her or his skill in a given area. This mode of computer-assisted learning is often justified by reference to the infinite patience of the computer.

10(b). **Problem solving through simulation**

The learner is provided with a programmed model which is designed to guide the learner along a variety of predetermined routes which should aid in developing the desired problem solving process. The subject matter and/or underlying theories are progressively revealed as the learner progresses through the simulation. Alternatively a structured yet open-ended format whereby the learner progressively selects or inputs data which the program assimilates, leads the learner on to uncover the patterns and principles of problem-solving strategies.

10(c). **Vocabulary/language exercises**

Several of this type of program have a gaming element which often relieves their repetitive format. They present an aid to language and vocabulary practice rather than initial learning.

10(d). **Grammar-based/structural activities**

Passages of text can be stripped of their punctuation, prefixes or suffixes, and the user attempts to restore the text to its original form. This type of program is designed to reinforce sound, basic English practices.

10(e). **Text manipulation**

Often incorporating cloze procedure in sentence or passage form. The learner may input the passage him/herself; so text manipulation in its simplest form provides a foundation for word processing.

10(f). **Word processing**

This can constitute an extremely useful tool and an important aid to literacy. A learner with poor writing style can gain tremendous satisfaction from producing his or her work in printed fair copy. Furthermore, the learner can edit original attempts to produce a document without the tedium of rewriting.

10(g). **Framework programs**

Framework-formatted programs present you with a versatile tool wherein the framework provides the basis on which individual learning programs can be created without prior knowledge of BASIC programming language. These programs could be regarded as particularly valuable for 16+ learners as language content is open ended and can be programmed specifically to their interest and ability level.

10(h). **Database**

A system whereby learners may set up their own files of information which the computer is able to sort and provide selective printouts from. Databases provide a useful store of information for individual/group projects.

10(i). **Game programs**

Often with striking audio/visual effects, yet of very little educational/training value. They may be used to provide incentives to learners to improve their co-ordination/motor skills through the keyboard.

10(j). **Numeracy programs**

Programs that range from the presentation of number identification to standard practice in the four rules. Many numeracy programs have a game element whilst others are based purely upon the drill and practice strategy.

10(k). **Adventure/discovery programs**

Interactive programs which may offer a blend of learning strategies which the learners must identify and use appropriately to achieve a hidden goal.

Quality of program/ package

Reliability and accuracy in presentation of concept(s)

The reliability and accuracy of software is a major determinant of its acceptability for use. When an unexpected input produces a nonsensical software output, a learner may experience a sense of frustration or failure and be unable to accept that the fault lay with the program's unexpected behaviour.

13. **Safeguards to error input (crashproof)**

Input keys not in use should be disabled by the program to avoid accidental incorrect input. BREAK and ESCAPE keys should be redefined to prevent accidental exit from the program.

14(a). **Balanced screen display with minimal text exposure**

Minimal text with clear uncluttered layout and enlarged character is most desirable. Thoughtless use of colour can render a screen display virtually unreadable, e.g. white on yellow.

14(b). **Appropriate and accurate graphic representation(s)**

Graphics representation should be relevant to the subject matter; a screen boasting a melee of graphics may be gratifying for the programmer, yet distracting and confusing for the learner.

14. and 15. **Ease of user input**

Particularly when a program is supported by a game element, it is not unknown for the keys identified by the program as up/down/left/right input to be spread across the keyboard so as to make it physically impossible to succeed, even before taking into account the fine motor difficulties experienced by some learners with special needs.

18. Flexibility in providing a range of options to cover a variety of ability levels

Programs should give you full control over the difficulty levels, timing of task performance and duration of on-screen displays to allow for (a), reading difficulties, and (b), learner/teacher/trainer discussion of learner input. (16. Progression of frame display should preferably be learner controlled.)

19. and 20. Language levels appropriate to learning concept(s) and/or to identified ability level

The language level of the program should be pitched at the level of the skill area presented. There are several examples of commercially available software which require a reading age of 12+ to comprehend operating instructions for a program geared to a reading age of 9+.

21. Variation in acceptable language input responses

If a program requires a vocabulary input from the learner, alternative answers, for example car, motor, motor car, should all be accepted as legal input by the program. Rejection of a perfectly legal input because of inferior programming could lead to learner disenchantment. Both upper- and lower-case letters should be acceptable.

22. Are simple procedures available for modifying programs?

It is often necessary to amend lines so that a program, initially designed for primary children, will be acceptable to 16+ learners. A program which makes provision for data line access increases its flexibility substantially as the vocabulary can be tailored to accommodate:

a) individual learner needs;
b) group projects.

23. Alternative peripheral input

Few programs offer alternative peripheral input for learners who are physically incapable of accessing software through the standard keyboard. However, attempts have been made to allow access through:

- joystick
- concept keyboard
- light pen
- keymaster (pedal control/headset control)
- large overlay board
- thumb switch
- micromike
- pressure pads
- mouse
- turtle
- touch screen

24. User input records for diagnostic assessment

Several programs, particularly those adopting a drill and skill strategy, store a record of learner responses which can be called up during or after a session enabling you to identify specific areas in need of remedy.

26. Printer dependency for hard copy

The motivational factor involved in enabling learners to print out their work in hard copy should not be underestimated. Co-ordination difficulties can render a good piece of writing illegible; programs providing printer dependency offer learners the opportunity to produce what may possibly be the first examples of fair copy that the learner finds acceptable.

27-31. Curriculum method and practice.

1. These are perhaps the most fundamental elements of effective computer-assisted learning. Will the software blend in to or affect current curriculum/training programme activities and the needs of 16+ learners with special needs? Will the programs support it, enhance it, extend it or change it? If computer-assisted learning is to be used effectively then

it must be used appropriately – that is, where it offers alternative learning opportunities. It should:

- be used to provide teaching and learning opportunities which could not easily be made available by other means;
- be identifiable for user group size/application;
- provide an additional motivating factor in the learning process.

The variety obtained by using a combination of different teaching styles, supported by selected software items could increase learner motivation, and retain enthusiasm and interest in learning.

Does the program really provide an interactive experience for the learner? Is the learner involved or does he press one key repetitively to operate the program?

In this element we have concentrated on CAL packages. These are the most numerous and readily available aspects of information technology in teaching/training. But there are many others emerging such as electronic mail, videotex and interactive video, which open up yet more possibilities. The **References and Bibliography** at the end of Element 9 will assist you in finding out more.

APPENDIX. ASSESSING FOR TECHNICAL AIDS

There are seven items in this appendix which are intended to give you an indication of the way in which individual needs can be assessed and met through the provision of technical aids. This process is used by Access centres, established in various parts of the country, whose role is to provide guidance on appropriate technical aids to support individual learners.

These items will help you to understand the issues and the processes involved in identifying needs and matching equipment to meet them.

Once decided, the individual learner will need training in the use of aids. This can also be provided. (See Flow chart on page 3.)

ITEM 1. A GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE PROCESS

STUDY AIDS AND STUDY STRATEGIES ASSESSMENT

A format for assessments

Assessment of external students will generally take one full day. The morning session is largely taken up by a discussion of the student's present circumstances, his/her plans for the future and main study needs, and by consideration of the effects of the student's disability including handwriting and typing speeds.

The lunch break gives an opportunity for selecting items of equipment for the student to try during the afternoon session, when, if possible, a practical study situation can be arranged to assess the most suitable communication aid and to give an opportunity to discuss study strategies.

The day should be concluded by a resume of the day's experiences and by the selection of suitable equipment. The following pages give a check-list to be used as a guideline during an assessment and a suggested structure for producing the final report. This should be sent to the student in the first instance for comments and amendment before being sent to the referral agency.

(from North West Regional Access Centre)

ITEM 2. CONTEXT CHECK-LIST

A check-list for identifying the context in which the learner is working – used to identify general needs. (For use by Access Centre staff)

STUDY AIDS AND STUDY STRATEGIES ASSESSMENT

Check-list

- Schooling
- Study environment
- Courses
- Interests – academic and general
- Future plans re: Further and higher education, open learning, training, employment
- Entry qualifications/skills required
- Future course plans
- Agencies involved in future plans – adequacy of support
- Previous assessments and agencies involved
- Functional effects of disability
- Student perception of issues
- Associated study difficulties, e.g. mobility, care support

ITEM 3. TECHNICAL NEEDS CHECK-LIST

A check-list to identify the technical needs of the individual in relation to the work he or she wishes to undertake.

Main study needs summary:

• Writing	equations, special symbols, essays, letters
• Presentation	subscript, superscript, tables
• Drawing	diagrams, flow charts
• Graphs	bar charts, line graphs, histograms
• Calculations	including scientific calculator
• Note taking	library, lecture, private, home
• Practicals	field trips, experiments, cookery, photography, art, etc.
• Examinations	extra time, amanuensis, use of equipment, pair of hands, transcription facilities, speed writing, etc.
• Numeracy	
• Literacy	
• Verbal communication	

ITEM 4. EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES CHECK-LIST

A check-list to identify technical needs in relation to equipment and resources available.

Handwriting issues – speed, fatigue, presentation

Equipment currently used

Keyboarding

- Seating and posture
- Nature of keyboard activity
- Switch system
- Appropriate part of body for switch use
- Positioning of equipment

Equipment constraints

- Existing system
- Cost
- Portability
- Aesthetics/personal taste

Availability of technology support at college – named person

Availability of student (care/classroom) support at college

- Funding applications
- Speech aid
- Low tech aids
- Environmental aids
- Further study strategies

ITEM 5. LEARNER'S NEEDS CHECK-LIST

A check-list which provides the basis for the report on the learner's needs and how they might be fulfilled.

STUDY AIDS AND STUDY STRATEGIES ASSESSMENT

Suggested report structure

Page 1: Name, address, telephone number, date of birth, nature of disability, assessment date, aims, objectives, referral agency.

Student profile

Summary of study needs

Writing

Keyboarding

Equipment currently used

Equipment tried at assessment – itemise and include brief description of system and evaluation in relation to needs.

Alternative study strategies

Other issues

Conclusions and recommendations might include:

- Board reasons for micro-based study aid
- System recommended
- Any alternative input device
- Software
- Training requirements in relation to equipment
- Insurance
- Rolling fund
- Course study recommendations
- Study support requirements
- Additional exam requirements

Equipment prices

ITEM 6. SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire used to ascertain the information contained in the check-lists.

ACCESS CENTRE-APPLICATION FORM

1. SURNAME (block letters) ____________ FIRST NAME(S) ____________

2. DATE OF BIRTH: ____________

3. POSTAL ADDRESS: ____________
____
____

TELEPHONE: ____________

4. LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY: ____________________

5. LAST SCHOOL ATTENDED: ____________________
(with dates) ____________________
____

6. LAST FURTHER EDUCATION/TRAINING ESTABLISHMENT ATTENDED:
(with dates) ____________________
____
____

7. DETAILS OF EXAMINATIONS:
Already taken:

Exam Body	Subject	Month/Year	Level	Grade

To be taken:

Exam Body	Subject	Month/Year	Level	Grade

8. WERE ANY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS MADE FOR YOU TO TAKE EXAMINATIONS?
IF SO, PLEASE GIVE DETAILS:
____
____
____

9. DETAILS OF EMPLOYMENT OR WORK EXPERIENCE (with dates):

Nature of employment	Name & address of employer	Dates

10. WHAT IS YOUR PRESENT OCCUPATION? ____________________
____
____

11. WHAT IS THE NATURE OF YOUR DISABILITY? ______________________

____

____

12. DO YOU (i) MAINLY TYPE?
(ii) MAINLY WRITE? ______________________

13. DO YOU USE ANY COMMUNICATION AID AT THE MOMENT?

IF SO PLEASE GIVE DETAILS. (Include details of its disadvantages)

____

____

____

14. DO YOU USE A WHEELCHAIR? YES/NO

IF YES, IS IT HAND-PROPELLED/ELECTRIC?

15. DO YOU EXPERIENCE ANY FURTHER DIFFICULTIES AS A CONSEQUENCE OF YOUR DISABILITY WITH:

HEARING – slight/moderate/severe
SEEING – slight/moderate/severe
SPEAKING – slight/moderate/severe
WRITING – slight/moderate/severe
LIFTING – slight/moderate/severe

16. ARE THERE ANY OTHER DIFFICULTIES WHICH YOU THINK IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL FOR US TO KNOW ABOUT?

____

____

____

17. PLEASE INDICATE YOUR MAIN INTERESTS IN THIS COURSE:
(tick those appropriate)

i) Assessment for communication aids
ii) Information on communication aids available
iii) Training for use of communication aids
iv) Short-term loan of equipment
v) Study skills for further education
vi) General information on access to further and higher education
vii) Any other – please give details

____

____

____

18. ANY FURTHER INFORMATION YOU CONSIDER RELEVANT TO YOUR APPLICATION:

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

COMMUNICATION AIDS ASSESSMENT COURSES STUDENT SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS

1. CARE

	Needs help (detail)	*Independent*
Morning		
Getting out of bed		
Bathing/personal care		
Dressing		
Toilet		
Wheelchair		
Meals		
Carrying food		
Carrying drinks		
Eating (including aids used)		
Drinking (including aids used)		
Night		
Bathing/personal care		
Undressing		
Getting into bed		
Turning		

2. MOBILITY

Wheelchair user	YES/NO
Manual/electric	YES/NO
Walks unaided	YES/NO
Walks with help	YES/NO

ITEM 7. AN EXAMPLE OF A SELF-PROFILE

This is used to ascertain the learner's perception of needs.

SELF-PROFILE: STUDY SKILLS

Please write in the boxes.

Name ☐

Today's date ☐

The space below is for a sample of your writing. You will be given something to copy.

Please leave this box blank.

Typing sample to be attached. You will be given something to copy.

Please answer each question by putting a tick in one of the boxes.

1. I mainly
   - .... write ☐
   - .... type ☐

2. My writing speed is
   - .... satisfactory ☐
   - .... slow ☐

3. I ... use all fingers of both hands
   - .... can ☐
   - .... cannot ☐

4. I ... find typing tuition helpful
   - .... would ☐
   - .... would not ☐

5. My writing/typing looks
   - .... good ☐
   - .... satisfactory ☐
   - .... poor ☐

6. You may tick more than one box for this question
   - I have no problems physically organising my work ☐
   - I have problems putting work in order in a file ☐
   - I have problems setting up a typewriter/computer ☐
   - I have other problems organising my work ☐

The problems are:

7. I find note-taking in class
   - .... satisfactory ☐
   - .... difficult ☐

8. You may tick more than one box for this question

   For my Education studies I need:
   - a) .... a typewriter ☐ and I own one ☐
   - b) .... computer/word processor ☐ and I own one ☐
   - c) .... microwriter ☐ and I own one ☐
   - d) .... expanded keyboard ☐ and I own one ☐

e) .... switch system ☐ and I own one ☐

f) .... speech aid ☐ and I own one ☐

g) .... cassette recorder ☐ and I own one ☐

h) .... brailler ☐ and I own one ☐

i) .... Braille 'n' Print ☐ and I own one ☐

j) .... others? ☐

In this box please give the NAME or MAKE of any typewriter, computer, word-processor, switch system or speech aid which you own or have used.

I have also used:

.... keyboard ☐ and I own one ☐

.... Bliss system ☐ and I own one ☐

.... book rest ☐ and I own one ☐

.... head pointer ☐ and I own one ☐

.... mouth stick ☐ and I own one ☐

.... hand pointer ☐ and I own one ☐

.... trolley ☐ and I own one ☐

adjustable/adjusted table ☐ and I own one ☐

I have also used:

9. I
.... do not ☐
.... do ☐
know of any other communication aids which I would like

I would like:

10. I
.... do not ☐
.... do ☐
have difficulties with speech

My difficulty is:

.... do not ☐
11. I have difficulties with sight
.... do ☐

My difficulty is:

.... do not ☐
12. I have difficulties with hearing
.... do ☐

My difficulty is:

.... do not ☐
13. I have other difficulties
.... do ☐

These difficulties are:

14. You may tick more than one box for this question

.... have not ☐
I had special arrangements made in the past for examinations
.... have ☐

I have been given a) .... word processing facilities ☐
b) .... typing facilities ☐
c) .... amanuensis ☐
(dictated answers)

☐ minutes extra per hour
d) .... Extra time ☐ minutes extra per exam
e) ...... Rest periods ☐

f) Other arrangements were made. These arrangements were:

15. My future plans include

.... being in employment ☐

going to a local college of further education ☐

going to a local polytechnic or university ☐

.... doing something else ☐

I should like to:

16. I .... have no ☐ / .... do have ☐ further suggestions about the study support I need

I should like to comment that:

Thank you for your help.

SUMMARY

EVALUATION CHECK-LIST

Can you:

- state what technical aids are?
- include the use of technical aids by learners in your course/training programme?
- identify main uses of information technology in training/teaching?
- use two strategies for the application of CAL packages?
- judge the usefulness and appropriateness of CAL packages for learners with special needs?

ORGANISATIONS PROVIDING FURTHER INFORMATION

Further Education Unit
2–6 Orange Street, London WC2H 7WE

National Council for Educational Technology
3 Devonshire Street, London W1N 2BA.

Microelectronics Education Support Unit
Advanced Technology Building, Science Park, University of Warwick, Coventry
CV4 7AL

ACE Centre
Ormerod School, Waynflete Road, Oxford OX3 8DD

National Federation of Access Centres at:

Hereward College, Coventry
North Herts. College, Letchworth
Bridgend College of Technology, Bridgend
Grantham College, Grantham, Lincs.
Oldham College, Lancashire
Polytechnic of Central London

Special Needs Microelectronics Resources Centres (SEMERCs) at:

Manchester SEMERC – Manchester Polytechnic, Hathersage Road, Manchester, M13 0JA
Newcastle SEMERC – Newcastle Polytechnic, Coach Lane Campus, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7XA
Bristol SEMERC – Bristol Polytechnic, Redland Hill, Bristol BS6 6UZ
Redbridge SEMERC – Dane Centre, Melbourne Road, Ilford, Essex

Scottish Council for Educational Technology
Dowanhill, 74 Victoria Crescent Road, Glasgow G12 9JN

CALL Centre (Communication Aids for Learners in Lothian)
University of Edinburgh, 4 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh EH8 9JT.

SIGNPOSTS

Links to other elements include the following:

SIGNPOST
Element 9. **Sources of Help and Advice**

SIGNPOST
Element 5. **Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies**

SIGNPOST
Element 3. **Devising Individual Learning Programmes**

8

LEARNING SUPPORT

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

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INTRODUCTION

For learners with special needs, the availability of the right guidance and support at the right time can be a crucial factor in ensuring access to learning opportunity. Guidance and support means providing facilities and processes to enable learners to progress, to make their own choices and to control their futures. It is about the empowerment of individual learners and not making decisions for them. Teachers/trainers have a crucial role in making support available as they have the major contact with the learners.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What do we mean by guidance and support?
- What is involved in the provision of guidance and support?
- What is your role in this provision?
- What skills do you need in order to make this provision?
- How can you develop these skills?
- What is the policy on guidance and support in your establishment?
- When should you seek specialist support?
- Do learners know where, when and how to get advice, guidance and support?

AIMS

- To examine the nature and process of guidance and support provision.
- To consider the role and responsibilities of teachers/trainers in the support process.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this element you will/should be able to:

- define what is meant by guidance and support;
- describe the activities you might use in providing guidance and support;
- show an understanding of your role and responsibility in providing initial support;
- use approaches which enable learners to take responsibility for their own learning;
- employ appropriate guidance and support techniques;
- implement your establishment policy on this issue;
- recognise the limits of your role and know when to get help from other sources.

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

EXERCISE 1. DEFINITION AND AIMS

Individual activity

This activity is designed to help you to consider what guidance and support mean and what their aims are.

In your work as a teacher/trainer, write down what the terms below mean to you:

- guidance

- support

Write down what you think the main aims of guidance and support are.

Small group activity

Form small groups of three or four and discuss your answers. Make a note of your conclusions and prepare to feed them back to the whole group.

RESPONSE CHECK-LIST

You may wish to compare the outcomes of your discussions with these descriptions.

Guidance

Some teacher/trainers describe guidance as:

- Giving the learners help in their choices over careers, courses, training programmes and/or the content of individual programmes, etc.
- Guidance covers advice on all matters relevant to education and training, whether vocational or personal.
- It is a helping strategy which encompasses numerous activities including counselling.

Support

Support is described by some as:

- providing the *extra* help required by learners to enable them to gain access to, and benefit from, education/training provision;
- making appropriate provision in terms of policy;
- resources;
- staff;
- liaison with other agencies to meet identified needs.

Guidance and support together aim to help learners to become more self-reliant and more able to cope with decisions about their futures.

In a training or education setting, the main rationale for guidance should be that it helps learners in making decisions that will shape the course of their education/training, vocational and personal development.

This broadly based approach to the provision of guidance and support means that staff will be involved in each of the areas of education/training, vocational and personal support. While the teacher/trainer is primarily concerned with learning, personal factors are likely to play an important part in the process and are sometimes impossible to separate from it. For some learners with special education/training needs this is particularly significant. The degree of involvement of each staff member will vary, depending on the policy and guidance procedures within each establishment and their roles in it, but all staff will need the same counselling and guidance skills.

The guidance and support process can be a lengthy one for some learners with special needs, some of whom will have spent much of their lives in sheltered environments. A process that aims to increase the independence and automony of learners with disabilities is the self-advocacy movement; we shall take a brief look at this next.

SELF-ADVOCACY

What is self-advocacy?

Cooper and Hersov (1987) describe self-advocacy simply as:

> 'People being their own advocates and speaking for themselves.'

The self-advocacy movement has developed during the last two decades and has particularly involved people with learning difficulties saying what they want for themselves and pursuing their own interests. Previously, these individuals had other people, such as parents or carers, who would speak for them, make decisions for them and determine their lives.

Self-advocacy includes the concepts of independence, freedom of choice, self-expression and group awareness. For people working with self-advocates, it means altering the balance of power in the relationship between the self-advocate and her/his parents and staff. Self-advocacy is not only about learning sets of skills, but also about changing relationships and attitudes. This does not mean that the learners have a licence to do or say anything they wish, but that they should have the same opportunities to choose their own goals and pursue them responsibly.

What are the component skills of self-advocacy?

SIGNPOST

Cooper and Hersov *We can Change the Future* (SKILL, 1987) deals in detail with this subject.

In order to help learners develop self-advocacy skills, it is necessary to understand the skills involved. These are:

- the ability to know what goals or objectives are possible;
- the ability to choose between goals;
- the ability to express choices and feelings;
- the ability to act upon the choice to achieve the objective and to assess progress;
- the ability to find help when necessary to achieve the chosen goal.

○ EXERCISE 2. THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER/TRAINER

Individual activity

It is important to recognise that the constraints experienced by the trainer/teacher in the training/teaching environment, are very different from those of the guidance 'specialist'. The professional specialist working either inside or outside of the teaching/training workplace will have a different role in support of the trainer/teacher and learner.

This activity enables you to consider your role in the guidance and support process.

Write down your responses to the following questions:

- Do you have a role in respect of guidance and support? Yes/No
- If yes: How do you see your role? If no: Why do you say this?

Guidelines for facilitators

You may wish the participants to share their responses to these questions. In the rest of the element, the activities will encourage the participants to review their opinions. You may prefer to ask them to keep their own written comments for comparison, as they progress through the element.

○ ○ ○ EXERCISE 3. ISSUES FOR GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

Small group activity

This exercise will help you to focus on the specific issues or problems which you might encounter in your work.

Draw up a list of issues or difficulties which a learner with special education/training needs may present to you.

You may find it easier to start with difficulties which you have encountered in your own experience.

Remember that most of these issues or difficulties could arise with any learner.

Here are some examples to start your list.

- 'I'm fed up with everybody making jokes about the way I talk.' (Learner with communication difficulties)
- 'I don't want to go to office skills any more, it's a waste of time.'
- 'I can't come to your session any more because I have to see the physiotherapist.'
- 'Nobody wants to work with me. They say I'm too slow.'
- 'My mum says I shouldn't be doing things like this because it's dangerous.'
- 'I can't find a boyfriend/girlfriend. It's making me really depressed.'

Discuss your list of issues and tick those which you think are your responsibility.

Who is responsible in the other cases?

Keep your list of issues for a later exercise.

EXERCISE 4. GUIDANCE ACTIVITIES

Whole group activity

This exercise will look at the kind of activities that might be involved in the provision of guidance. The choice of activity will depend on the circumstances and context in which the guidance occurs.

Brainstorm the activities you think might be included in the overall function of guidance.

Discuss and revise your list.

Give a brief example or description for each of the activities you have listed.

Check your list against these suggestions:

CHECK-LIST

Informing	giving details of the range of options available, offering no judgements as to how the information should be used.
Advising	making a suggestion based on experience, helping the learner to interpret information, but ensuring that the learner chooses how to act on it.
Negotiating	working things out, in discussion with the learner.
Counselling	helping learners to reflect on and understand the issues and problems confronting them.
Enabling	helping learners to deal with the demands of the learning experience of the course/training programme or other organisations, institutions or agencies.
Advocating	negotiating directly with others on behalf of the learner.
Teaching	providing learning experiences which help the learners to gain appropriate skills to deal with the issues or problems.
Changing the system	some problems may be resolved by changing the system rather than the learner.
Liaising	conferring with others, with or on behalf of the learner about progress.
Reviewing	discussing progress with the learner and making related decisions.

SIGNPOST

Negotiation is explored in Element 3. **Devising Individual Learning Programmes.**

SIGNPOST

Element 4. **Assessment and Review** covers this issue.

Referring	identifying and contacting the most appropriate source of further guidance and support for the learner.
Taking action	acting on behalf of the learner in an advocacy role to achieve a specific outcome. This can be a part of guidance work if it enables learners to take action for themselves in future.
Evaluating	assessing the effectiveness of an approach to issues/problems.

● ● ●

Small group activity

Form the same small groups as for Exercise 3.

Find your list of issues from Exercise 3.

Consider which of the guidance activities you would use for each issue. Remember that these activities are not mutually exclusive; you may find yourself involved in more than one activity in the same session.

Identify other staff who may be involved in the guidance provision.

You should make a list of any of the guidance activities which you feel insufficiently skilled or experienced to attempt yourself.

STAGES OF INTERVENTION

The roles of guidance and support may be usefully examined by identifying the stages through which the learner will pass. These stages apply to the whole of the formal course/training programme as well as the parts such as work experience, off-the-job training, etc. These are:

- at the pre-entry stage (including recruitment/selection)
- on entry to the learning activity (induction)
- during (participation in the activity)
- at the end (transition, preparing for progression)

● ● ●

EXERCISE 5. EXPLORING THE STAGES

Small group activity

This exercise helps you to consider the issues which are likely to confront learners at various stages during their courses or training programmes. It also highlights the role of the teacher/trainer in providing appropriate guidance and support.

Form four groups. Each group should select one of the stages identified above.
Stage 1:

- Imagine you are one of the central characters.
- Consider and list the kinds of problems you might experience.
- Think of the questions which you might want to ask.

Stage 2:

- Identify and record the aims of the tutor in providing guidance for the learners in Stage 1.
- Suggest the most appropriate guidance activities for achieving those aims.

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Each group should feed back the outcomes of their discussions.

INFORMATION SHEET

The following list highlights a number of general issues for the learners at each of the stages as well as possible aims for the teacher/trainer.

At the Pre-entry stage
(including recruitment/ selection)

It is important to note that many people and agencies may be involved at this stage, including the careers service, schools, etc. Although you may not be directly involved, it is necessary to be aware of the issues.

Learner issues

What skills do I have?
Which of these do I want to work on further?
What will I be able to do with the new skills I develop?
How will this training programme/course help?
What will the training programme/course be like?
What will I be expected to do?
What demands will be made of me?

Aims for the guidance agents

- To help the learner to identify her or his learning needs and develop a personal agenda as a basis for an individual programme plan.
- To assist the learner to understand the nature and structure of the training programme/course.
- To explain what the training programme/course involves and what will be expected of the learner.
- To help the learners to understand the benefits and costs of attending the training programme/course.

Guidance activities
Mainly informing, negotiating, contracting, liaising.

On entry to the Learning activity
(induction)

Learner issues

Where is everything?
Who is everyone?
What do people expect of me? (staff and fellow trainees/students)
Is it like I expected it to be?
How do I get out of here?

Aims for the teacher/trainer or managing agent

- To help learners to cope with transition.
- To help them come to terms with what is expected of them on the training programme/course.
- To enable learners to explore and work through any anxieties they may feel about the training programme/course.

Guidance activities

Mainly informing, referring, advising, monitoring, counselling, liaising.

During
(participation in the activity)

Learner issues

How am I getting on?
Can I cope?
Why do I have to do . . .?
Am I happy with the course/training programme?
Am I getting what I wanted/expected?

Aims for the trainer/teacher

- To help the learner to reflect and review progress.
- To help her/him to accept the consequences of the learner role and the demands made on her or him.
- To monitor learner progress and identify and tackle any blocks to learning.

Guidance activities

These include negotiating, counselling, enabling, teaching, liaising, reviewing, evaluating.

At the end
(transition, preparing for progression)

Learner issues

What can I do now?
What have I learned?
What do I want to do next?
What will I do next?
How can I go about acting on my decision?
Who can help me?

Aims for the trainer/teacher

- To help the learner to review achievements in terms of knowledge and skill development, personal development and competence.
- To assist learners to examine the range of options and make choices.
- To prepare learners for accepting the outcomes of their decisions, i.e. the possibility of not getting what they want and exploring other options.
- To help learners to implement their action plans.

Guidance activities

These include informing, advising, counselling, advocating, changing the system, liaising, reviewing, referring, evaluating.

[adapted from *Tutoring* (Longman for FEU, 1982)]

SKILLS FOR GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

The first, essential requirement for the provision of effective guidance and support is a good relationship between the tutor/trainer and the learner. This relationship must be based on trust which grows from acceptance, respect and openness.

This section will look at three areas of skill which are essential to all guidance in personal, educational/training or vocational matters.

These skill areas are:

- attending and active listening
- questioning
- giving feedback

SKILL 1. ATTENDING AND ACTIVE LISTENING

Giving other people your full attention and concentrating on what they are saying and what they mean is not easy.

This is especially the case in the kinds of situations in which teacher/trainers might find themselves involved in giving guidance and support.

Although we all, supposedly, spend a lot of time listening, it is surprising how often in a conversation people say what they think without really listening to the other person.

Listening involves two aspects: attending and getting the message.

Some learners with special needs will have difficulty in communicating. For them, it is especially essential that you employ these skills.

● EXERCISE 6. ATTENDING

Individual exercise

In order to listen attentively, it is necessary to put aside your own concerns and show a real interest. This involves using your face and body. These activities are designed to explore these factors.

Think of an occasion when you were talking to someone who you felt was not listening to you.

List all the clues and signs that made you realise that the person was not listening.

Write down how you felt. What emotions did you feel?

How did you react?

● ● ●

Groups of three

Form groups of three.

One person spends two to three minutes talking about any subject.

The second person actively avoids listening.

The third person observes.

Swap roles and repeat the exercise, but this time the second person listens attentively.

List all the clues and signs that the person *was not* listening.

List all the indicators that the person *was* listening.

Discuss how the 'talkers' felt in both cases.

Supporting information

You may like to compare your observations with the following.

Not listening

– physical clues and signs

No eye contact, posture, head movements, facial expression, no nodding or smiling, fiddling with papers, yawning.

– verbal clues

Lack of any response, talking about something else, humming or whistling.

Listening

– physical clues and signs

Eye contact, facing the person, an open posture, nodding, reflecting the 'talker's' facial expression.

– verbal clues

Saying yes or uh-huh, responses which show an interest.

How the 'talker' felt

– when the listener was not listening

Angry, frustrated, disappointed, aggressive, irritated, depressed.

– when the listener was listening

Encouraged, relieved, understood, happy, interested.

GETTING THE MESSAGE

Attending and listening carefully is the first step to good communications but this is not enough on its own. A high degree of skill and concentration is necessary in order to understand the *real* message. You need to consider both the content of what is said and the way in which it is said. Any discrepancy between these two features could indicate a hidden message.

In order to attend and listen actively, we need to remind ourselves constantly of these questions:

- Am I able, and do I care enough, to give this person my full attention?
- Do I really prefer talking to listening?
- Am I thinking about the effect I am having on the learner?
- What sort of signs and clues am I giving – physically, verbally?
- Do I only hear what I expect, or want, to hear?
- Do I listen for hidden messages, both what is said and how it is said?
- Am I distinguishing between what the learner says is the problem and what is the real problem?

SKILL 2. QUESTIONING

Teachers/trainers use questioning techniques as an everyday part of their teaching/training. In this setting, the questioning is often to check whether learning has occurred and the teacher/trainer often knows the answer to the question being asked. In providing guidance and support, the questions will have a different emphasis. You may not know the answer for any individual learner and you will try to encourage the learner not only to express 'the facts' but also to explore his/her feelings towards them. It is important to recognise that the way questions are phrased and presented by the questioner, can shape the response.

Different types of questions:

open	– cannot be answered with a simple yes/no
closed	– requires a simple response, a yes/no answer
multiple	– two or three questions strung together; these are difficult to answer and therefore easy to avoid
leading	– you are implying the answer and asking the learner to agree
vague	– no clear purpose
rhetorical	– answers your own question
follow-up question	– asks the learner to explain more

● ● ● EXERCISE 7. TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Small group activity

This exercise enables you to consider the types of question which will be of use to you in providing guidance for your learners.

Form small groups of three to five.

Imagine you are helping a learner with her or his work. Think of, and write down, a few examples of each of the types of questions listed above. (You may like to add some other types of questions yourself.)

Identify those questions which you think will be most useful in providing guidance. Prepare to feed back the outcomes of your discussions to the whole group.

How look at this example.

1. You are finding this work difficult aren't you?
2. What are you finding difficult about this work?
3. What do you think makes this work difficult for you?

What types of questions are these, and what do they encourage the learner to think about?

Discuss and write down your views.

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Guidelines for facilitators

Each group feeds back the main points of the discussion.

You may find it interesting to compare the outcomes of your discussions with this interpretation:

1. Closed question. The learner is required only to think whether the work is or isn't hard.
2. Open question. This encourages the learner to think about where the difficulties lie.
3. Open question. This allows the learner to think about his/her **feelings** about the difficulty.

Questions 2 and 3 are likely to serve a more useful purpose.

USING SILENCES

In teaching/training it is usual to prompt the learners to help them find the answer. However, the provision of guidance and support can be hindered by this technique since it is important to give the learners time to reply. This means that you may need to leave silences to enable the learner to reflect and work things out.

Judging when to allow a silence and when to ask another question is difficult. You may feel awkward sitting in silence but do not be tempted to fill the space with multiple questions, preventing the learner from making progress.

The other consideration for some learners with special needs, is attention span. If the learner has a limited attention span or is easily distracted, you may need to repeat the question and check that she or he is still thinking about the issue.

There is no rule about leaving silences; the only answer is to try questioning as a form of guidance, yourself.

FORMULATING QUESTIONS

Useful forms of question are:

- those which encourage the learners to think things through for themselves;
- those which follow up what is said by asking for expansion, clarification or confirmation. This may involve paraphrasing and summarising what has been said so you can check that you have listened attentively and understood both thoughts and feelings;
- those which turn the learners' general responses into concrete form. This helps the learner to focus, to explore the real difficulty and to understand better her or his own feelings.

● EXERCISE 8. PHRASING QUESTIONS

Individual activity

This activity helps you to explore ways of phrasing questions.

Read through the examples of questions given below. Add further examples of your own.

Questions which encourage the learners to think things through for themselves:

- What do you think about that?
- What else could you look at?
- How do you feel about that?
- What was your reaction?

Questions which follow up what is said by asking for expansion, clarification or confirmation. This may involve paraphrasing and summarising what has been said. This will enable you to check that you have listened attentively and understood both thoughts and feelings:

- Can you tell me more about...?
- What do you mean by...?
- Am I right in thinking that...?
- So what you're saying is...?

Questions which turn the learners' general responses into concrete form. This helps the learner to focus and explore the real difficulty and achieve greater self-understanding:

- I'm fed up with...
- What exactly are you fed up about...?

Guidelines for facilitators

You may wish to make a composite list of all the suggestions made by participants and discuss whether or not they would achieve their aim.

● ● ● EXERCISE 9. MOVING THE DISCUSSION FORWARDS

Small goup activity

It is easy to get stuck in a discussion by simply repeating the initial points. This activity is designed to help you to rehearse your responses to comments from your learners so you can move the discussion forwards.

Form small groups of three or four.

Discuss and note the questions you would ask in response to the list of general statements given below, in order to move the discussion forwards.

SAMPLE STATEMENTS

'I can't keep up with the others.'
Q. How can we change things to help you?

'I don't like working with this group.'
Q.

'I'm really angry.'
Q.

'I feel very depressed.'
Q.

'I hate this course/training programme.'
Q.

'You keep on getting at me.'
Q.

'Things are bad at home.'
Q.

'What's the point of it all?'
Q.

'I just can't do it.'
Q.

'They always leave me out.'
Q.

EXERCISE 10. GUIDANCE IN PRACTICE: LISTENING AND QUESTIONING

Activity in groups of three

The best way of developing your guidance skills is to try them out. This exercise will give you an opportunity to practise.

Form groups of three.

One person will act as the interviewee, the second person will be the interviewer and the third person will observe. The exercise will be repeated three times, so you can take on each role. For each interview/discussion you should spend a few minutes preparing for the role. Each interview/discussion should take about five minutes.

Interviewee

You will determine the subject of the session. You can:

- select a problem you have experienced or are currently experiencing in relation to your work.
- role-play by:

  either assuming the role of a learner with whom you have been working and discussing a problem she or he has experienced or by assuming the role of one of our central case studies and discussing a given problem.

You have arranged to talk about your problem with your tutor/trainer or colleague.

Interviewer

You have arranged to talk about a problem.

Your interviewee will either be discussing his/her own work problem, or will be playing the role of a learner with a particular problem.

You should concentrate on attending and actively listening (physical and verbal factors), understanding the real problem and on your questioning skills.

Observer

You should take notes on the guidance session.

You should include examples of:

- physical attending
- verbal attending
- awareness of the real problem
- types of questions asked
- the interviewee's response to each of the above

Discussion

Comment on the following:

- What was good about the interviewer's performance?
- What could be improved and how?
- How did the interviewee feel and respond?
- Any other observations.

SUMMARY OF THE STAGES IN THE GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT PROCESS

Establishing a relationship

- trust
- respect
- acceptance
- openness
- expressing interest
- attending and active listening

Exploring the issue

- getting the message
- using open questions
- phrasing questions appropriately

Helping the learner to

- achieve understanding
- take action
- consider the options
- make own decisions
- tackle own problems
- plan action
- implement action
- evaluate and review

SKILL 3. FEEDBACK

The guidance and support process involves giving and receiving feedback. This enables the learner to receive information about how she or he is seen by others and the effects of his or her behaviour from the points of view of other people. It includes giving information about how the learner goes about things and what the learner actually did, rather than just referring to the outcomes. Carl Rogers has considered the process of providing feedback, and references to his work are made in the **References and Bibliography** section of Element 9.

Useful feedback:

- helps learners to be aware of how other people see them;
- is given in an acceptable way, e.g. without humiliating, embarrassing or making the learner lose face;
- is accurate;
- is given in a sensitive way.

Teacher/trainers need to consider:

- When is it useful to give feedback?
- What kind of feedback should be given?
- How can it help the learner?

AVOIDING THE PITFALLS

It is all too easy for the unwary trainer/teacher to fall into the traps identified below. The first step to avoiding the pitfalls is to be aware of them.

• Elaborate sympathising	This shifts the focus from the learner to your own feelings.
• Imposing your own values	It is easy to make judgements based on your own values which may well differ from the learner's.

• Being 'over psychological'	Try to avoid attaching 'labels' related to your own psychological theories; avoid trying to play 'the amateur psychiatrist/psychologist'.
• Being too busy to listen	Time is important; make an appointment if necessary.
• Finding a quick solution	This often masks the real underlying problem.
• Blocking emotions	It is difficult to deal with a learner's outburst, but it might be a necessary part of the process for him or her.
• Asking too many questions	This fails to allow the learner to take control of the discussion.

The trainer/teacher should, through active listening, adopt the role of a *reflector*. This enables the learner to develop self-reliance, independence and become 'empowered'.

• Wanting to be 'liked'	In developing good working relationships, it is easy to begin to feel indispensible. Avoid overfamiliarily with those with special needs. It is belittling and hinders their self image.
• Coping with silence	It is difficult not to feel uncomfortable. You need to be able to manage silence.
• Collusion or identification	Identifying your own views or feelings with your learners turns the focus from them to you.
• Wanting to do too much	This is an easy trap with those who have special needs. You need to find ways of helping your learners to help themselves.
• Transferring your anxiety	When the situation is threatening to you, it is important not to reflect anxiety back.
• Making too many allowances	It is essential to be aware of the danger of this with learners with special needs; it is easy to underestimate and avoid challenging them.

● ● EXERCISE 11. GUIDANCE: AVOIDING THE PITFALLS

Activity for pairs

This exercise should enable you to become aware of the various pitfalls, so you can avoid them in your work. It helps you to explore appropriate responses.

Form pairs. One participant will play the role of the trainer/teacher, the other will play the learner.

Trainer/teacher	Choose one of the pitfalls outlined above. Respond in a way which illustrates it.
Learner	Choose an issue on which you wish to receive guidance. You may wish to select from those identified in Exercise 2.

SIGNPOST
Element 5.
Training/Teaching and Learning Strategies

Change roles and repeat the role-play. This time the trainer/teacher should respond in a way which avoids the pitfall.

Repeat this sequence until you have covered most, or all, of the pitfalls.

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Discuss the outcomes of the role-plays, noting the appropriate responses and approaches which were used.

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT – ESTABLISHMENT POLICY

By this stage it should be quite evident that, as teacher/trainers, we are all involved in developing self-reliance and independence in all of our learners. The teacher/trainer plays an important part in facilitating this process by providing the first level of guidance and support. It is equally important to ensure that there is a clear policy on how this provision should be made available throughout the whole establishment.

It is evident that any learner who is experiencing difficulties will fail to make adequate progress. She or he may unburden him/herself on any staff member, repeating the same problems and failing to make any real progress in tackling them. The most satisfactory way of dealing with these instances is to have a nominated person with responsibility for each learner. This may already be an established part of your working practice.

For example, you may have:

- a tutorial system
- access to managing agents
- course tutor responsibilities
- college counsellors
- access to specialists
- a guidance team

On the other hand you may have an informal arrangement.

Whatever your circumstances, you should ensure that:

- each learner has a named person to turn to when necessary;
- the learner knows who this person is, and where/how they may be contacted;
- all staff concerned with the learner know who the named person is;
- the named person and the learner can get on with each other.

SIGNPOST

Element 9, **Sources of Help and Advice** considers this in greater detail.

It is not necessary for all learners with special education/training needs to be the responsibility of specialist staff members (where they exist). Any member of staff may appropriately offer guidance and support to these learners. Remember, there is a limit to what any individual can do, so the crucial thing is to know when and where you can go to if specialist help is needed.

● ● ● EXERCISE 12. ORGANISING GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

Small group activity

This exercise enables you to examine or develop your establishment policy on guidance and support.

Advance preparation

Make sure that you have any available, written documentation of your establishment's policy relating to guidance and support.

Methods

Form small groups of three to five and look at the provision of guidance and support in your establishment by answering these questions:

- Who are the people available to offer guidance and support, in your establishment?
- Do different people offer guidance on different types of problems, e.g. personal problems, educational/training problems?
- Do all staff see some of the provision of guidance and support as a part of their responsibility?
- Do all learners have a named person to monitor their support and guidance needs?
- Do the learners know who this is and when/how they can be contacted?
- Do the other staff know who the named person is for each learner? How can staff find out who this is?

- Who is responsible for allocating learners to staff?
- How flexible is the provision of guidance and support?
- Is time allocated for guidance and support? Is it adequate?
- Are there opportunities for informal guidance and support? If not, how can you provide them?
- Can it take place individually and/or in a group? Who decides?
- Do you share relevant information between staff members? How is this organised?
- What policy do you have in relation to the issue of confidentiality? If none, what should it be?
- How do you decide to refer learners for more specialist help?
- Are all staff members aware of the other agencies to whom referral may be made? If not, how can they be made aware?
- Are there opportunities for all staff to practise and develop their guidance skills? If not, how can they be made available?

Use your answers to:

- either devise a policy for the provision of guidance and support in your establishment;
- or discuss and revise your existing policy.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This is a complex issue and one which you need to talk about in your workplace. Whatever your practice and/or policy, the most important consideration is to be honest with the learner. If you cannot or do not keep information confidential, then this should be clearly stated to the learner. As a result, you may chose not to encourage the disclosure of personal information. By stating your position clearly, you are enabling the learner to make his/her own decision about what to tell to whom.

● ● ● ● EXERCISE 13. CONFIDENTIALITY

Whole group activity

This exercise assists you in considering the issue of confidentiality and the appropriate action to take when incidents occur.

Brainstorm a list of possible guidance topics which could raise issues of confidentiality. Include examples of any incidents in which you have been involved.

For example:

- A learner says she or he has just been diagnosed as having epilepsy, but doesn't want anyone to know.
- A learner with learning difficulties says her father has been 'interfering' with her.
- You tackle two learners who are behaving badly. They say they have been glue sniffing, and 'What's it to do with you anyway?'

● ● ●

Small group activity

Form small groups of three or four.

Discuss what action you would take in each of the cases identified in the brainstorm.

Devise guidelines on confidentiality to give to a new staff member.

Guidelines for facilitators

You may wish to discuss the guidelines as a large group and draw up one set. These may be used by your establishment, subject, of course, to your verification procedures.

REFERRAL – OTHER SOURCES OF HELP

There will always be occasions when circumstances suggest that you should refer a learner to someone with the appropriate expertise. For example, you may feel that the problem is long term and will require ongoing contact. You may feel that you are out of your depth or that expert advice is essential.

You will need to decide for yourself:

- whether you are 'opting out' because it is easier or more comfortable for you to do so;
- whether you could provide the guidance if you, yourself, receive support from an 'expert';
- whether the guidance needed really requires the introduction of expert help.

Deciding when to refer a learner to another agency, is a skill in its own right.

Once you have decided to look for other support, a number of questions arise:

- Who is the appropriate person/agency?
- What kind of service is provided?
- How should contact be made for referral?
- Who should make that contact?
- Who can help you to answer these questions?

SIGNPOST

Element 9. **Sources of Help and Advice**, can assist you in finding the answers.

EXERCISE 14. SUMMARY: GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT IN PRACTICE

Small group activity

This exercise helps you to utilise the issues considered in this element in applying the skills you have developed. It presents a number of case-studies to enable you to do so.

Methods

Form small groups of three or four.

Look at the case-studies and decide what action you would take.

- Would you provide guidance yourself?
- What form would it take?
- What would you need to consider?
- Would you refer elsewhere?
- If so, when, where and how?
- If not, why not?

You will need the case-study information about the young people – Chris, Richard, Michael and Sandeep – from the **Resources Section**.

Consider the additional information about them, given on the next page.

Whole group activity

Each group should feed back the outcomes of the discussion. There are notes provided with which you can compare these outcomes.

Finish the activity by summarising the most important points about the provision of guidance and support.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Case-study: Chris

Chris is a learner in your group and he has poor written communication skills. This group has been together for several months. For some reason, the group has rejected Chris. They refuse to work with him and whenever you plan pair or small-group activities, he is always left out. At first you thought it was just a passing phase, but it has been going on for too long. Chris is shut out of all activities.

Case-study: Richard

Richard is one of the young men in your group. He has discovered that the other members of his group have less strict parents. They are allowed to stay out late, wear fashionable clothes, go to discos and have girlfriends. He has had constant rows with his family and wants to leave home and share a flat like some of the others. He asks you if you can advise him on how to find a flat share.

Case-study: Michael

Michael attended from a boarding school for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. He has been making adequate progress apart from a few unexplained absences. He gets on quite well with the other learners but you have heard reports, on the grapevine, suggesting that he has a vicious temper. He has been absent for four days, then returns with deep cuts and bad bruising to hands and face, saying that he can't do any written or practical work.

Case-study: Sandeep

Sandeep has been working reasonably well but has been quiet and withdrawn. He has suffered from depression and takes medication regularly. Sandeep's parents are both high earning, professional people and his brother is academically able. He asks to see you because he says the work is too hard.

Discussion options

A number of options can be considered in each of these cases.

Case-study: Chris

The first case may be seen as primarily a case of group management and would be something which you would deal with. Individual guidance for Chris and group guidance were approaches suggested. It would be important to find out what the *real* problem is, and to try to deal with that.

Case-study: Richard

The second case would probably be referred on, as Richard's problems appears to be complex and long term. It is unlikely to be limited to a problem of accommodation. When, where and how you would refer, depend on your particular establishment's policy and staffing.

Case-study: Michael

In the third case you would need to deal with the immediate problem of how the learner can participate given the temporary disability. It may be appropriate to discuss the cause with Michael, especially as there have been obvious signs of violence. Michael's responses to initial questioning may indicate a need for some long-term guidance from another source.

Case-study: Sandeep

Sandeep would probably be offered guidance by the tutor/trainer in relation to the perceived difficulties over the work. This may or may not be the real problem. If Sandeep is taking medication, then it is likely that he is receiving regular medical check-ups. This may provide a source of referral if the problem is more complex than it appears. On the other hand, it is easy to jump to conclusions on the basis of Sandeep's past history. It is important that adequate support and guidance is offered by the teacher/trainer before any other action is suggested.

SUMMARY

EVALUATION CHECK-LIST

Can you:

- define what is meant by guidance and support?
- describe its main aims?
- list and describe a number of activities which you might use in providing guidance and support?
- identify the main skills you need in providing guidance and support?
- list the skills you feel sufficiently skilled to try in practice?
  If not, how do you plan to develop them?
- identify the major pitfalls in providing guidance and support?
- ensure that you don't fall into the pitfalls?
- describe the organisation of guidance within your own establishment?
- gain access to it?
- describe some possible issues arising from confidentiality and the stance you would take?
- list the types of problems on which you would offer guidance and support yourself?
- recognise when you would suggest referring the problem on to specialist staff?
- identify the useful agencies outside your establishment?
  If not, what action do you plan to take?

SIGNPOSTS

Links to other elements include the following:

SIGNPOST

Element 9, **Sources of Help and Advice,** considers the people and agencies in detail.

SIGNPOST

Element 3. **Devising Individual Learning Programmes** – section on negotiation.

SIGNPOST

Element 4. **Assessment and Review**

9

SOURCES OF HELP AND ADVICE/ REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

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INTRODUCTION

Above all else, support strategies are vital to learners with special needs as they provide the hub around which the rest of the process revolves, and are provided from a wide range of sources. You have primary responsibility for making provision for the needs of learners. However, if viewed as the task of the teacher/trainer alone, it can appear quite daunting. Therefore, it is vital to know when, how and where to get help and advice.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What is the problem?
- How far should we seek to become the expert?
- When should we seek advice and help from others?
- How special are special needs? Do we already have the expertise to manage?
- What potential sources of help and advice are available locally, regionally and nationally?
- How do we assess the value and quality of advice?
- How far is the learner the source of help and advice?
- Is the surface problem the *real* problem or merely a symptom?
- Where does the balance lie between providing help and advice and encouraging the learner to take responsibility?
- How much do we need to know?
- How much do we need to tell?
- How much do we need to record?

AIMS

- To examine the provision of help and advice.
- To consider when, where and how to obtain it.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this element you should be able to:

- identify when learners need extra help and advice;
- distinguish between those needs which you can meet and those requiring the help of others;
- identify and access sources for meeting those needs in house, locally, regionally and nationally;
- show an appreciation of the need for confidentiality.

HELP AND ADVICE

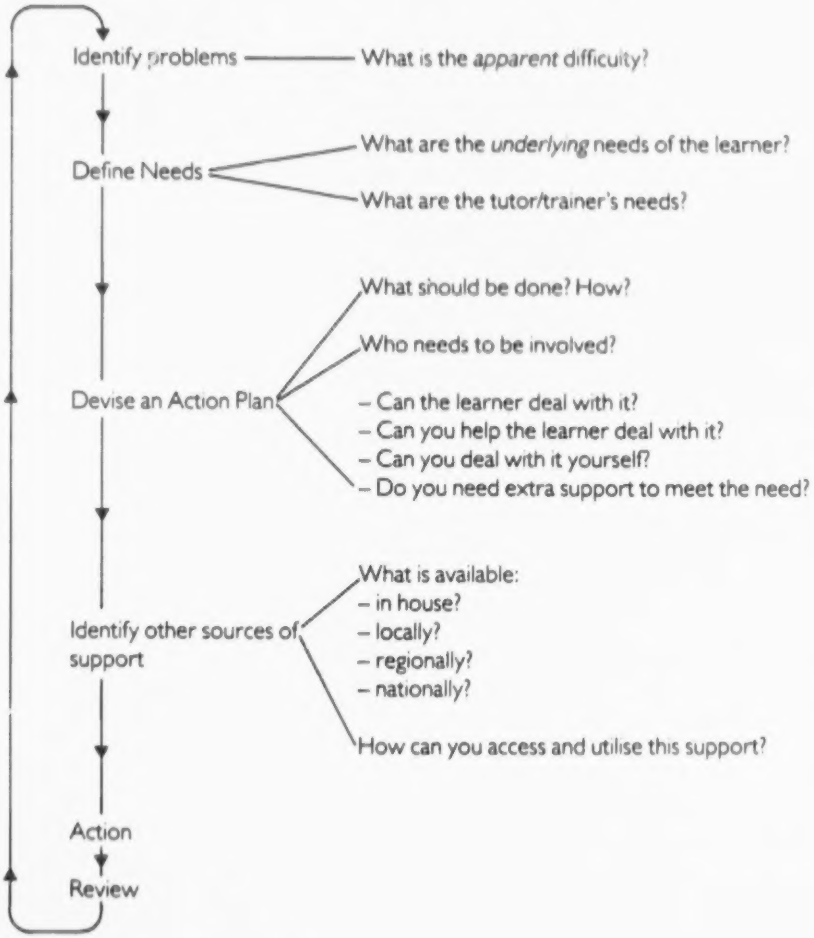
BASIC PRINCIPLES

For learners with special needs, achieving full access means providing support for both learners and teachers. The support process is illustrated in diagrammatic form overleaf, after which a number of suggested activities are provided. Experience has shown that support has to be carefully planned if it is to be effective and, because of the complex and/or diverse needs of many young people with disabilities or learning difficulties, the support is often best rooted in multi-agency, co-operation and co-ordination.

The basic principle is that the learner is *your* learner and it is *your* responsibility to ensure that the learner's special needs are met. This does not mean that you will be the *only* source for the provision of support.

Special education/training needs do not exist in a vacuum. This point was mentioned briefly in the **User's Guide** when defining special educational needs, and in more detail in the **Introductory Element**. They arise from the interaction of the learner with the course/training programme, in the education/training environment. This interaction, involving the learner and the teacher/trainer, is central to the provision of appropriate support to meet special needs.

DIAGRAMS. THE SUPPORT PROCESS



Identify problems — What is the *apparent* difficulty?

Define Needs
- What are the *underlying* needs of the learner?
- What are the tutor/trainer's needs?

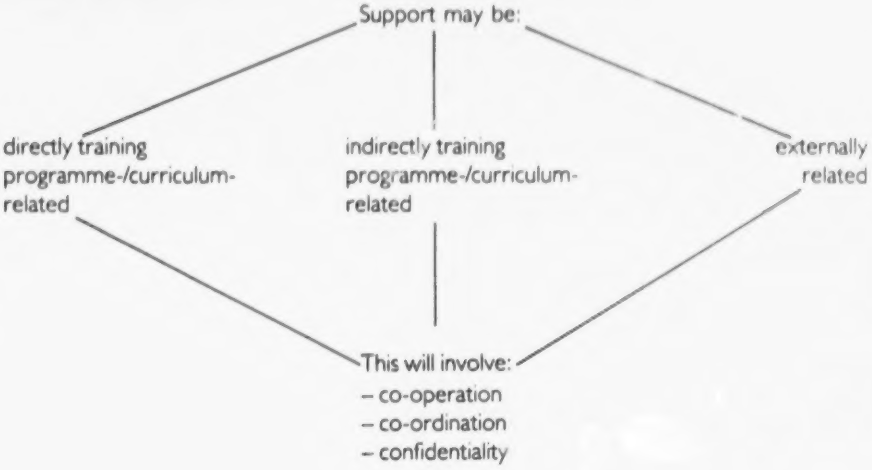
Devise an Action Plan
- What should be done? How?
- Who needs to be involved?
- – Can the learner deal with it?
- – Can you help the learner deal with it?
- – Can you deal with it yourself?
- – Do you need extra support to meet the need?

Identify other sources of support
- What is available:
  - – in house?
  - – locally?
  - – regionally?
  - – nationally?
- How can you access and utilise this support?

Action

Review

Advice and support can come from a wide range of different sources



Support may be:

directly training programme-/curriculum-related

indirectly training programme-/curriculum-related

externally related

This will involve:
– co-operation
– co-ordination
– confidentiality

● ● ● EXERCISE 1. IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS AND DEFINING NEEDS

Small group activity

This exercise enables you to look at the first phase of the support process and to practise identifying problems and defining needs.

Form small groups.

You will need to choose two or three examples of learners for this activity, from the options listed below. Make slight adaptations for your own setting, e.g. Maria is on a YTS course but her details could be slightly modified to represent a college student.

OPTIONS

Option 1

Maria (character 1) and Chris (character 2), represent two of the case-studies found in the resource material at the back of the package. The further information on Chris is presented to enable you to role-play the situation. Allocate the roles of Chris and the staff member, and spend some time preparing them before you begin. You have been given little information on Chris's answers in order to enable you to decide what is most likely to be the response in your setting.

Additional information on these central characters is given below.

SIGNPOST

Information on role-plays will be found in Element 5, **Teaching/Training and Learning Strategies** Section 3.

Option 2

Eddie and Veronica are two different examples not used elsewhere which you may like to use. They are described on the next page.

Option 3

Choose examples of two or three learners with special needs, known to you. Draw up a brief case-study or description for each, before you begin the activity.

Use the support process diagram (page 3) to:

- identify the apparent and underlying problems;
- define the needs for each learner.

Make a note of your conclusions. You will need to keep these for use in the next activity.

CASE-STUDIES I

Maria

Maria's last work experience placement as part of her YTS course ended with the revelation that money was short on the till. It was felt that it was an isolated incident and a genuine mistake, but she still requires extra time and support to help her to succeed. Her appearance acts as an indirect constraint on her success and means that she does not present herself well.

Here are some guidelines:

- What are Maria's views about her work experience placement?
- What does she feel about the incident?
- What does she think she should do?
- What issues about personal presentation and grooming are raised?
- How can these issues be approached appropriately?

Chris

Chris's progress has been slow but steady. At his review, a residential placement concentrating on independence, skill training and personal effectiveness was recommended and agreed, as an important element of this personal programme plan.

Chris sees various staff during the course of his programme. On Friday morning Chris cannot do leisure pursuits in the gym with the others because he has a sore toe. This external constraint to the normal programme affects Chris for several weeks. He cannot join in. When he tells you he cannot go on the planned residential for this group and is seen to be limping on the way to the refectory, what do you, as the mainstream PE tutor, do for Chris? What action do you take to ensure that this complaint does not affect Chris's programme involvements for an undue length of time?

Here are some guidelines:

- Does Chris *want* help to sort out his problem?
- Is anybody else helping him?
- Has he been to his own GP? What happened?
- Does he realise there is a nurse available within the college?
- What action has he already taken?
- Who could you contact within the scheme or college to advise you?
- What else could Chris be doing when he cannot do leisure pursuits?

Eddie

Eddie is 36, married with two girls, aged 9 and 11, and is now unemployed. He is visually impaired and in the last 18 months his eyesight has deteriorated so much that he had to leave his job. He was advised to gain qualifications by the disablement resettlement officer at the Jobcentre so he came to the college to gain academic qualifications but he did not find the return to study easy and, after much discussion, was transferred to a Caring course. Eddie requires direct modification of the curriculum, needs access to well typed notes, needs to record lectures and it takes him a long time to read. He has a special machine at home and his daughters help him to read things. Interestingly, Eddie's return to study has highlighted his wife's literacy problems. She finds it difficult to help him.

At first he needed to learn his route to college with his guide dog and the mobility officer who is also the social worker for the blind. She helped him to enrol. A representative from the Royal National Institute for the Blind talked to Eddie's tutor at the beginning of term but his assignments are late, pressure is building up and, as a result of Eddie's learning needs, he is under stress.

Here are some guidelines:

- Ask other tutors who teach on that course for their comments to see if the problem is a general one.
- Get Eddie a good set of typed notes and help him summarise the main points to minimise the amount he has to read. A befriending system could be effective.

- Discuss with the college SEN co-ordinator, if appropriate.
- Find out what extra support, if any, is available for Eddie.
- Maximise use of tape recordings of lessons and adapt the curriculum in favour of oral presentation if necessary.
- Build a good relationship and build in guidance and advice. Both Eddie's self-awareness and the monitoring of his progress will then be eased.
- If out of your depth, ask for advice in house, locally, regionally and nationally.

As a mainstream tutor on the Caring course what action would you take?

Who would you contact and why?

Veronica

Veronica has very considerable abilities but is dyslexic. Over the years she has adopted various strategies to cope with her difficulties and she is now at college doing a BTEC National Course. Her difficulty is under control but she often needs extra time as her short term aural memory is poor. She is aware of the required curriculum strategies if she is to succeed.

Veronica is such a pleasant outgoing person that when she explains this to you, as the mainstream Business Studies tutor, and asks for your help in a quiet way after class early in the course, you are pleased to do all you can. She needs written instructions; she can remember complex ones for a short time only, she has difficulty remembering sequences and needs to organise her work and notes carefully. She writes slowly so she arranges for a friend to duplicate her notes using some carbon paper. In this instance you, as the mainstream tutor, and Veronica, because of her insight into her needs, resolve the problem with the lecturer and no further action is required other than to ensure that exam concessions are arranged. Veronica will need extra time if she is to succeed. Who does this in your college/institute?

Here are some guidelines:

- Is there anybody else you need to inform?
- Does Veronica want you to?
- Are her needs a confidential matter?

● ● ● EXERCISE 2. DEVISING AN ACTION PLAN

Small group activity

This exercise enables you to consider what should be done, how and by whom.

Form small groups.

Take the examples and outcomes from the previous exercise.

Detail a plan for action for each learner.

Look at the support process diagram (page 3) and use the following list of questions to help you with your action plan.

- Have both the learner and teacher/trainer agreed on the needs?
- Does the learner *want* help to deal with the problem?
- Can the learner devise his/her own action plan:
  - without help?
  - with the trainer/teacher's help?
  - with the help of others?
- What actions have already been taken to meet the needs identified? Were they successful? Could they be improved?

- What else should be done to meet the needs?
  List the actions required.
- How will these actions be carried out?
- Who should be involved?
- Will the learner and teacher/trainer need extra support?
  What form should it take?

These extra sources of support will be examined in the next exercise.

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Each group should report on the outcomes of their discussions from the first two exercises.

● ● ● EXERCISE 3. SOURCES OF SUPPORT

Small group activity

This exercise is designed to enable you to explore the range of possible sources of support for any learners.

Form four small groups.

Each group should brainstorm and list the whole range of possible sources of support in one of these areas:

a) In-house support

b) Local support

c) Regional support

d) National support

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Each group should present the list of support sources. Other participants may wish to add to these lists so a comprehensive list of suggestions may be made.

You may find it useful to use this list to begin a directory of support sources for your workplace. This can then be updated as necessary and made readily available to all staff.

The list on the next page was produced by another group. You may wish to compare it with yours.

CHECK-LIST

In-house support

Is the source of expertise available in house? Who can help?

FE	Training Agency
Course tutor	Trainer and counsellor
Tutors	Other trainers
Co-ordinator	Manager
Personal tutor/	YTS co-ordinators
Counsellor/support tutor if appropriate, to secure prior info from other services involved, share other agencies' relevant information	

Any member of staff who has previous experience of similar problems

Check policy and guidelines. Is there a problem? If yes, define it. How identified? Who will be the key person responsible for the learner?

Local support

Parents relatives and friends
Technical officer (for blind) (Social Services)
Mobility officer (Social Services)
Disablement resettlement officer
Employment Rehabilitation Centre (Jobcentre)
Disablement Advisory Service (Jobcentre)
Accredited training centres
Other local colleges/schools/specialist units/accredited training centres
LEA officers and advisors/experienced employers
GPs/voluntary organisations
Careers officers – generic and specialist careers officers
Access/health and safety officer (fire service)
Local health authority workers

Regional support

Regional Curriculum Bases
Regional Advisory Council
Relevant voluntary organisations
Regional Office of the Training Agency
Higher education establishments
Regional Examining Boards
National Union of Students

National support

National voluntary organisations
The Training Agency, Head Office – Sheffield
Department of Employment
Department of Social Security
Department of Education and Science
Further Education Unit
Training Standards Advisory Service
Her Majesty's Inspectorate
National Union of Students
National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education
Special Educational Needs Database
National Examining Boards
National Educational Resources Information Service

EXERCISE 4. UTILISING SUPPORT

Small group activity

Once you and the learner have defined the problem and have agreed that, in order to meet the needs identified, you need to seek help from external sources of support, you need to consider where and how to do this.

This exercise helps you to consider the most appropriate sources of support and how to utilise them.

Form small groups.

You will need to take each of the learners from Exercises 1 and 2, for whom you have identified the need for extra support.

Decide which are the most appropriate sources of support for each learner:

- in house
- locally
- regionally
- nationally

How can you access and utilise this support?

You may have found the answers to where and how you can obtain this extra support, from within the group.

- If so, you can add the information to your directory of sources of support.
- If not, you should devise an action plan for obtaining this information ready to report back by the next training session, or any date you choose to specify.

You may find it easier if participants are set the task of finding out where and how one or two sources may be utilised for each.

Devise a format for recording the information in a way that is useful for your organisation.

For example:

- name of source
- nature of support
- telephone
- address
- hours of opening
- contact person
- leaflets or information sheets, etc.

● ● ● EXERCISE 5. DISCUSSING THE ISSUES

Small group activity

You may have found that these exercises raised a number of important questions about the provision of help and support. This activity will help you to consider the issues raised and to produce guidelines for good practice.

Form small groups and *devise* a short list of guidelines for good practice, which you could present to a new member of staff.

Use the following questions to help you to do this, drawing on your experience of the cases you have worked on in this element, and your experience as a tutor/trainer.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- How much that you deal with is specifically *your* responsibility?
- *When* should you turn to others for help and support?
- How can you judge the value/quality of the advice and support received?
- The confidentiality issue:
  - How much do you need to know?
  - How much do you need to tell?
  - How much should you record?
- How can you get the balance right between developing the learner's own independence, self-advocacy and responsibility, and your own intervention?
- Can you always abide by the learner's wishes?
  If not, how do you justify not doing so?
- How far can you avoid problems with careful pre-planning?
- How can you ensure that you don't forget the support services normally available (i.e. those not usually labelled 'special')?
- Who will co-ordinate the support? Who will be the 'key' person?

You may have a number of other questions to add to the list.

SIGNPOST

Element 8. **Guidance and Support** deals with the issues of confidentiality and the provision of guidance.

● EXERCISE 6. CO-ORDINATING ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Individual activity

This exercise helps you to examine your own actions and responsibilities in the support process and to consider the need for co-ordination.

Part 1

Consider this information.

Kay is a learner on your course/training programme. Her progress has been slow but otherwise satisfactory but recently you have noticed a dramatic change in her behaviour and personality. Normally quite lively and popular, she has become increasingly withdrawn and giggly or upset. You are trying to help her with her work when you realise she is completely ignoring you. You ask her what the matter is. She gives you a vivid description of a recent incident of sexual abuse. She begins laughing, then crying hysterically and repeating the details of what has happened. She says she is pregnant.

What could you do?

List the possibilities.

●●●

Form small groups and share your responses from Part 1.

Small group activity

Part 2

Discuss the responses in the light of this additional information.

The same or similar events have happened with other teachers/trainers. The YTS supervisor/the special needs co-ordinator in your college has interviewed her and spoken to the staff at the sheltered accommodation where she lives. Kay is not pregnant and it is not clear what incident (if any) has occurred. She has been described as suffering from 'a nervous breakdown'. She has seen a psychologist and has an appointment arranged to see a psychiatrist. Although her moods are extreme, the psychologist and the staff at her home think it is better for her to continue with the course/training programme.

Now consider the following points.

Decide whether there is a need for one person to act as the co-ordinating point for communications and who that person should be in your workplace.

If you feel one person should act as co-ordinator:

- List the factors you would like to communicate to the co-ordinator.
- Decide on the best way of doing this.
- How can you maintain effective communication in the medium/long term?
- What should the co-ordinator keep you informed of?

Draw a diagram to illustrate all the links in the communication network. Ensure that you include all possible sources of support.

●●●●

Whole group activity

Each group should feed back the outcomes of their discussions and should show their communication network diagrams. Formulate a procedure for dealing with communications in your workplace, based on your discussions.

Incorporate this procedure into your guidelines for good practice. Consider how your guidelines can become formally adopted and used in your workplace.

● ● ● EXERCISE 7. SUMMARY ACTIVITY

Small group activity

This summary activity enables you to use the support process diagram and to apply the issues you have been considering in this element, in practice.

Form small groups.

You will need the case-studies of Barry, Paul and Cheryl, which are to be found on the following pages.

Each case-study asks a specific question.
Use the support process diagram to address the questions.

Use your guidelines for good practice to discuss your answers.
Ensure that you have considered all the issues.

Make a note of your conclusions.

● ● ● ●

Whole group activity

Each group should feed back the outcomes of their discussions and a summary of the main points should be made.

Guidelines for facilitators

You may like to spend some time going through the same process in order to consider any actual cases that participants have in their work.

CASE-STUDIES 2

BARRY

Barry is 17 years old and has moderate learning difficulties. He attended a local secondary school and was identified by the support staff as needing additional help in core curriculum areas, particularly in expressing himself, either directly or indirectly.

He now attends a one-year bridging course at the local FE college. It is likely that Barry will join a premium-funded YTS scheme after this.

Barry is rather overweight and has a significant speech difficulty. His verbal communication skills are exacerbated by the lack of speech therapy support, now that he has left school. Staff interaction with Barry is not helped by his being teased over his poor speech by the other students. As a consequence of this, Barry is becoming increasingly more self-conscious.

Staff have noticed that, as the FE course progresses, Barry is becoming verbally and physically aggressive towards his student peers who make fun of his speech and also his roly-poly appearance. Although Barry wants to learn to read, his limited attention span contributes to the problems he experiences in trying.

The tutor feels that despite Barry's difficulty in articulation, the benefits that he would experience from being able to encode (at present unintelligible) symbols into understandable form would:

- give Barry access to communications/instructions for wider community involvement;
- give him the opportunity of a higher acceptance with his college peers and hence would improve his own self-image.

Question

Where would help be sought and how could it be co-ordinated, so that a twin approach towards Barry's limited literacy level and articulation difficulty could be successfully remedied?

PAUL

Paul is 18 years old. Having attended a weekly boarding school for the deaf, he has recently begun a YTS premium-funded training workshop placement.

Paul is quite small, to the extent of looking four or five years younger than he actually is. He has lived with his adoptive parents for six years now, having a number of short-term foster parents before that. Paul has a profound hearing loss and very little intelligible speech. He appears to find manual communication confusing, although two of his YTS trainers are trying to learn Sign-Supported English at a local evening class, to help their efforts in communicating with Paul.

While at the residential school he previously attended, Paul underachieved to such an extent that it was felt that he had severe learning difficulties and was therefore placed in a small group of boys, all of whom had the same perceived level of ability. The school report commented that Paul's behaviour could become quite obsessive, the latest example being a fascination with aircraft. One of his adopted parents is partially deaf herself and uses Sign-Supported English to communicate with Paul at home.

The change from a weekly boarding special school for the deaf to a local YTS placement was initially quite traumatic. Paul found he was experiencing many social opportunities, with and without his peers, for the first time. This was almost overwhelming for him at first and he expressed a child-like excitement at achieving tasks at which he was not expected to be successful. A psychologist met Paul twice; despite the communication difficulty it was thought that Paul's level of ability was with the low/average range.

Paul's mother is still very nervous of Paul failing – to the extent of initially calling in to his training placement frequently to see his supervisors to see that everything was OK, although this happens less frequently now. The behaviour of some of the trainees is sometimes very attention-seeking and anti-social, and many have difficult behaviour as the main presenting need, although there are many others.

On several occasions Paul has been suspected of stealing money and sweets from the other trainees, and even from the staff. It appears that his adoptive parents are quite hard up, Paul's stepfather having lost his job several years ago due to an industrial injury.

The specialist social worker for the deaf has had contact with the family but is now leaving to join another local authority for a senior post. At a recent home visit it was realised that Paul's manual communication was in fact a Makaton and British Sign Language. This was explained to Paul's mother, who only understands Sign-Supported English. Earlier today, Paul was found with his hand in a member of staff's handbag, although when challenged about this, he signed that he had lost his aircraft book.

Questions

How would you help Paul to understand the consequences of his actions? What support would you need?

How could this be explained to his parents without their over-reacting? Their usual response is to remove all his personal cash when there is a problem. You want to ensure that it doesn't happen again.

CHERYL

Cheryl is 22 years old. On three days a week she attends a Social Education Centre for people with severe learning difficulties. On the other two days she attends a local FE college for several classes, which involve a mixture of discrete and integrated provision.

The college classes that Cheryl goes to include basic cooking, music and movement, sports options and art and craft. The first two are discrete classes, the latter are on an integrated basis, where she attends established classes in the college.

While Cheryl greatly enjoys the classes she attends, it is obvious that she finds great difficulty in fine motor skills. Her 'clumsy' approach sometimes distresses Cheryl, particularly when some carefully completed work is spoilt, unintentionally, by mishandling or grasping an item.

Communication with the Social Education Centre is very limited, although apparently the staff there approve of the provision that the college is attempting to offer. At the moment, the specialist and mainstream FE tutors feel they are working in isolation, with respect to what the students are involved in for the rest of the week. A number of specific students, including Cheryl, could be taught more effectively if they, the tutors, were made more aware of strategies that are successful at the SEC, it is argued.

The SEC staff also feel that their work is undervalued and is seen as occupational activity. The local college has received praise for embarking on innovative work but the SEC staff feel they have been involved in this work, on an unrecognised basis, for many years.

Questions

Where would FE staff find help for Cheryl, so that her 'clumsy' approach can be worked on discretely, in the classes she attends?

Generally, how can college staff find help and support so that the provision they now offer is appropriate and effective for the students with severe learning difficulties with whom they are now (increasingly) working?

SUMMARY

EVALUATION CHECK-LIST

Can you:

- identify when learners are experiencing difficulties which require extra help and advice?
- define their needs for help and advice?
- help them to devise, or devise yourself, a plan of action for providing that help and advice?
- decide when the learner can deal with the difficulty, you can help the learner with it, or you require extra support yourself to meet the need?
- identify what help is available: in house, locally, regionally and nationally?
- access appropriate sources of help and advice?

This element, **Sources of Help and Advice**, has examined the support process and has focused on the range of possible sources of help and advice which are available. At the very start of this element we stressed that you are responsible for the needs of your learners, but you will probably not be the only person involved in providing that help necessary to meet those needs. The emphasis in this element has been the extensive resources *beyond* your own personal skills, which are available. This element is closely related to Element 8, **Guidance and Support**, which deals with identifying and developing *your own* personal guidance skills.

SIGNPOSTS

This element links into issues discussed in all the other elements of the pack but those most directly connected include:

SIGNPOST

Element 5, **Training/ Teaching and Learning Strategies**. Section 3, Role-play.

SIGNPOST

This element is closely linked with Element 8, **Guidance and Support.**

REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography is for use with the entire **Learning Support** pack. The numbers in brackets refer to elements where specific reference is made to that particular publication or where it will be especially relevant.

ALBSU *Training In Adult Literacy and Basic Skills* 1985 (**5**)

A practical guide giving advice on strategies for the development of training ideas for staff working on literacy and basic skills schemes. It does not need adaptation for special needs work as the issues in literacy and basic skills are the same.

ALBSU *Working with Groups: Styles of Leadership* 1985 (**5**)

A handbook on the practical issues related to working in groups and the teaching style which is appropriate for adult literacy students. It covers the subject in a way which is also directly relevant to special needs work.

Alexander,K. *Putting on the Style: An Author's Handbook for the Textual Component of Courseware* FEU, 1986 (**6,7**)

A handbook for producing courseware, looking at the whole process from planning to producing final copy. An easy to follow guide which could be used as an open learning package or as part of a training session with minimal adaptation.

* Bell,J. *Identify and Diagnose Exceptional Students* (Module L-2 of Category L – serving students with special/exceptional needs, *Professional Teacher Education Module* series) American Association for Vocational Instructional Materials, Georgia, 1984 (**3,4**)

Contains substantial sections on individualising learning materials. This is a self-contained module which gives objectives, case-studies and activities as well as a self-evaluation sheet.

* Bell,J. *Modify the Learning Environment for Exceptional Students* (Module L-5 of Category L – serving students with special/exceptional needs, *Professional Teacher Education Module* series) American Association for Vocational Instructional Materials, Georgia, 1984 (**5**)

Contains substantial materials on ways of adapting the learning environment in order to meet individual needs.

Bradley, J., Dee, L. and Hegarty, S. *From Coping to Confidence: A Staff Development Resource Pack for FE Teachers of Students with Moderate Learning Difficulties* DES/FEU/NFER, 1985 (**2,3,4,5,6,8,9**)

A package developed specifically for meeting staff development needs for students with moderate learning difficulties. Contains a wealth of information and activities along with a comprehensive guide to help special needs co-ordinators with delivery.

BTEC *Assessment and Grading* 1986 (**4**)

This pack provides guidelines on assessment and grading through an activity-based programme of staff development. It includes a rationale and introduction, exercises, a resources section and a glossary. Although designed for small group activity with mainstream staff, it contains numerous ideas and is in a useful format for adaptation to special needs work.

Careers and Occupational Information Service *Active Learning: A Practical Approach* MSC, 1987 (**5**)

This pack introduces student-centred learning and includes recognising the characteristics of a learner-centred approach, adapting existing practice, and delivery and evaluation of effectiveness. It is designed for use for staff development and contains structured sessions, activities and support materials.

Carrington, D. *CPVE Information Technology* Education Development Centre, 1986 (**7**)

A software and courseware directory of materials which are relevant to meeting CPVE core skills and can be used as supporting materials in training sessions.

Carroll, S. and McQuade, P. *The Staff Development Manual Volume 1: Delivering the Curriculum* Framework Press, 1987 (**3,4,5,6,8**)

This pack is designed to meet the requirements of the RSA certificate for vocational preparation for tutors, but is readily adaptable for use in any context.

Collins, N. *New Teaching Skills* OUP, 1986 (**5,8**)

This book deals in depth with negotiation, counselling, guidance and group work. It also includes the creation and management of learning opportunities. Simple and clear presentation makes it readily adaptable to provide training materials.

Cooper, D. *A College Guide: Meeting Special Educational Needs* Longman for FEU, 1986 (**1**)

The guide deals with special needs in general and includes physical and sensory disabilities and medical conditions, learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is aimed at a wide range of professionals and tries to focus on meeting needs rather than defining disabling conditions.

Cooper, D. and Hersov, J. *We Can Change the Future* NBHS (now Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities), 1986 (**1,5,8**)

A training resource to help staff become aware of self-advocacy and its implications and to help them to develop the skills and appropriate strategies for developing self-advocacy skills in their students. A comprehensive list of activities and information on the subject.

Cotterell, A., Holyfield, J., Morgan, D. and Russell, P. *Pre-Vocational Core Studies: Tutor's Book* Heinemann Educational, 1985 (**2,3,4,5,8**)

A useful introductory guide for courses of pre-vocational core studies or work at a similar level. It includes student-centred learning, group work methods, individual learning strategies, support and guidance, assessment, a check-list of core aims and a substantial bibliography.

Council for Educational Technology *Information Technology and Work Preparation Courses for Slow Learners in Further Education Colleges* 1987 (**7**)

Dee, L. *New Directions: A Curriculum Framework for Students with Severe Learning Difficulties* FEU, 1988 (**2,4,5**)

This contains valuable information on curriculum design and implementation for students with severe learning difficulties. It includes examples of a curriculum framework which was tested in a wide range of institutions and which could be adapted to form training materials for this area.

Derbyshire County Council *Assessor's Manual of Good Practice* 1985 (**4**)

This book outlines the development and contents of a complete assessment programme. It is particularly geared to managing agents or sponsors of YTS.

Essex County Council *Record of Achievement Assessment Handbook* 1987 (**4**)

FEU *Assessment, Quality and Competence: Staff Training Issues for NCVQ: An FEU View* Longman for FEU, 1986 (**4**)

This looks at the review of vocational qualifications objectives and discusses the nature and assessment of competence, including the implications for RVQ. Useful for issues to be considered in staff development programmes, particularly in FE and YTS.

FEU *Behaviour and Motivation: Disruption in Further Education* Longman for FEU, 1987 (**5**)

A collection of papers which include: disillusionment with FE; the changing FE scene; mismatch and disruption; boredom; special needs arising from emotional and behavioural difficulties; classroom relationships and staff development. It can be adapted to provide training material.

FEU *Computer Based Learning in FE: A Staff Development Guide* 1985 (**7**)

This provides a staff development model and gives background information on training. It is targeted at mainstream staff development workers but is equally applicable to special needs work.

FEU *FEU/Pickup Staff Development Programme* 1986 (**4**)

FEU *Information Technology Support Systems for Education and Training* 1987 (**7**)

FEU *Making Progress? The Function of Assessment for Students with Moderate Learning Difficulties* Longman for FEU, 1982 (**4**)

FEU *Planning Staff Development: A Guide for Managers* 1987 (**2**)

This guide is designed to offer support to those who have staff development responsibilities. It includes the management of staff development, the identification and analysis of needs, programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

FEU *Profiles: A Review of Issues and Practice in the Use and Development of Student Profiles* 1982 (**4**)

FEU *Profiles in Context* Longman for FEU, 1987 (**4**)

This book provides important information on current develolpments in accreditation for all students, including those with special needs, and discusses: records of achievement; peer assessment; graded tests and profiles; profiles in CPVE; computer-assisted profiling; adult profiling; RSA certificate. It would need to be adapted to provide staff development material.

FEU *Relevance, Flexibility and Competence* 1987 (**2**)

This provides a curriculum framework and strategy which is recommended for all post-14 education and training. It is a major source on curriculum strategy but needs to be adapted to provide training material.

FEU In RP195 (Experimental College Project) Tameside College of Technology produced a *Guide to Active Learning*, 1985 (**2,5**)

FEU Courseware Unit *Courseware Directory* 1988 (**7**)

Fish, J. *Equal Opportunities For All?* ILEA, 1985 (**1**)

Fowler, P. *A Core Library of Software for FE Students with Moderate Learning Difficulties* Council for Educational Technology, 1987 (**7**)

This includes a description of the appropriate ways of using the software contained in the core library list. It is an invaluable document around which to build training sessions on this subject.

Fowler, P. *IT Helps: Information Technology for FE Students with Special Needs* Council for Educational Technology, 1988 (**7**)

Gilbert, J. *Software for Students with Moderate Learning Difficulties* FEU, 1984 (Reprinted as part of the package *From Coping to Confidence* FEU, 1985) (**7**)

Hamblin, D. *Guidance: 16–19* Basil Blackwell, 1983 (**8**)

An informative book which includes: issues; techniques of guidance and counselling; group guidance; adjustment to work/careers/preparation for unemployment; group interaction and social skills.

*Harrington,L. and Hutchison, L. *Plan Instruction for Exceptional Students* (Module L-3 of category L – serving students with special/exceptional needs, *Professional Teacher Education Module* series) American Association for Vocational Instructional Materials, Georgia, 1984 (**3**)

A self-contained module which gives objectives, case-studies, activities and a self-evaluation sheet.

Heathcote, G., Kempa, R. and Roberts, I. *Curriculum Styles and Strategies: A Review of Styles and Strategies of Curriculum Innovation in Secondary (and Higher) Education and Their Relevance to Further Education* FEU, 1982 (**2**)

Hope, M.(ed.) *The Magic of the Micro: A Resource for Children with Learning Difficulties* Council for Educational Technology, 1986 (**7**)

Hutchinson, D. and Tennyson, C. *Transition to Adulthood: A Curriculum Framework for Students with Severe Physical Disability* FEU, 1986 (**2,4,5**)

This is a description of a research project to examine a curriculum framework for students with severe physical disability. It is easily adaptable to staff development material and contains plenty of useful information so it is worth persevering with, despite its presentation and design.

*Hutchison, L. and Wonacott, M. *Assess the Progress of Exceptional Students* (Module L-9 of category L – serving students with special/exceptional needs, *Professional Teacher Education Module* series) American Association for Vocational Instructional Materials, Georgia, 1984 (**4**)

A self-contained module which gives objectives, case-studies, activities and a self-evaluation sheet.

Joint Board for Pre-Vocational Education *CPVE Part A: The CPVE Framework and Criteria for Approval of Schemes* 1985 (**2**)

Joint Board for Pre-Vocational Education *CPVE Part B: Core Competences and Vocational Module Specifications* 1985 (**2**)

Lewis, R. *How to Help Learners Assess Their Progress: Writing Objectives, Self-Assessment Questions and Activities* Council for Educational Technology, 1984 (**4,6**)

An easy to follow guide which is applicable to special needs, it includes various means of helping learners to assess their progress.

Lewis, R. and Paine, N. *How to Find and Adapt Materials and Select Media* Council for Educational Technology, 1986 (**6**)

One of a series of open learning guides designed to give practical help to people setting up open learning programmes.

Lewis, R. and Pates, A. *Learning Workshops: A Manual of Guidance on Setting Up and Running Flexible Learning Workshops* Longman for FEU, 1987 (**5,6**)

A manual which gives guidance on setting up and running flexible learning workshops, it includes information on learner support and learning materials, as well as examples of workshops in practice. It contains comprehensive information and detailed descriptions of workshops visited and can be used, with little adaptation, as training material.

MSC *Development of Assessable Standards for National Certification* 1988 (**4**)

This is essential background information for anyone involved in MSC (now Training Agency) programmes. It offers guidance on: a code of practice; deriving elements of competence; definition of performance criteria; characteristics of units of performance; issues in assessment; monitoring of assessment practices; underpinning knowledge and understanding; task management and standards.

MSC *Learning: Youth Training Scheme* 1983 (**5**)

This is a basic manual targeted at MSC (Training Agency) trainers but applicable in any post-school setting. It includes information on training for transfer, learning at work and skills for learning.

MSC *Presenting a Training Session* 1985

This guide gives straightforward, useful advice for inexperienced staff trainers. It is not training material as such, but a source of advice on staff training targeted at MSC (Training Agency) staff. It is, however, applicable in any post-school setting.

MSC *YTS Special Training Needs: A Code of Practice* 1988 (**1,2,4,5,8**)

This provides information on the structure and support services for YTS special training needs.

MSC *YTS Training For Skills* 1986 (**2**)

McMahon, T. *Developing Tutoring Skills: Supporting a Staff Development Programme* FEU, 1985 (**8**)

This book is the report on a project examining nine staff development programmes on tutoring and counselling in practice and is designed to be of use to those organising and running staff development programmes. It contains many ideas and examples of actual practice and is useful without adaptation except for adding some examples of special needs work.

Mansell, J. *Skills for Living: A Curriculum Framework for Young People in FE with Moderate Learning Difficulties* FEU, 1982 (**5**)

Mencap/Open University *Patterns for Living* (A joint Open University/Mencap course for all those involved with mentally handicapped people) OU, 1986 (**5,9**)

Although designed as an open learning package, this has been widely used in staff training for special needs. It encompasses lists of useful sources and resources, strategies for developing social skills, sex and marriage, work and leisure, integration and normalisation, and community and personal support.

Merseyside Inner Accredited Training Centre *Initial Assessment: A Course Tutor's Guide* Fielden House, 1987 (**4**)

This package was developed for staff training in relation to YTS and is aimed at the initial assessment of 'low achievers'. It contains information and ideas for discovering abilities and interests.

Miller, J. *Training in Individual Guidance and Support* MSC, 1982 (**8**)

A practical booklet targeted at the former YOP schemes but still useful as a basic guide in this area, it covers planning, implementation and evaluation of in-service training.

Miller, J. *Tutoring: The Guidance and Counselling Role of the Tutor in Vocational Preparation* Longman for FEU, 1982 (**8**)

This is an invaluable source on the subject which is useful for special needs work and forms the basis of many subsequent publications for staff development in this area.

Miller, J., Taylor, B. and Watts, A.G. *Towards a Personal Guidance Base* Longman for FEU, 1983 (**8**)

An excellent resource on the guidance and counselling role of the tutor in the setting up of a guidance base within the college, this is an invaluable source on the subject and easily adaptable for special needs work.

National Bureau for Handicapped Students (now Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities) *TVEI and Special Educational Needs – Getting Involved in Profiling* 1987 (**4**)

National Union of Students *Disabilities Pack: It's Our College Now* 1987 (**1**)

National Youth Bureau *Staff Development Handbook* 1986

A practical guide for YTS managers on all aspects of implementing a staff training programme, it is also applicable in contexts beyond YTS.

Nickerson, W., Zannettou, I and Sutton, J. *Succeeding with the Deaf Student at College: Special Needs Occasional Paper No. 4* Longman for FEU, 1986 (**6**)

Open University *P521 Teaching Strategies for Continuing Education: Teaching Approaches, Methods and Aids* 1985 (**5**)

This is an invaluable information pack with an audio tape and includes a user guide, information on students' learning needs, adult learning experiences and problems, evaluation and group behaviour, teaching methods and teaching aids.

Perry, J. *Skills for Adult Working Life: A Guide to Resources* Longman for Schools Council, 1984 (**5**)

This is a useful resource which can be adapted for application in a special needs context. It includes lists of materials concerning life and social skills, learning and study skills, skill development, consumer education and skills identification in curriculum development, assessment and professional development.

Pring, R. *Common Core – Teaching and Learning: Guidance to Teachers and Tutors Involved in 17+ and Other Core Curricula* Longman for FEU, 1984 (**5**)

Scottish Council for Educational Technology *Student-Centred Learning 16+* 1986 (**3,4,5,6,8**)

This package is designed for individual study, small group work or as part of formal training. It is clear, easy to use and readily adaptable for special needs.

Sheffield and Rotherham Accredited Training Centre *Trainees with Learning Difficulties: Tutor Notes* Sheffield ATC, 1987 (**4**)

This consists of tutor notes for a one-day course on initial assessment of trainees with learning difficulties and, although it is designed for YTS trainers, it has applications in other settings.

Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities *A Preparation for Adult Life* (video) 1988

This video demonstrates teaching and learning strategies that can be employed by trainers or teachers new to dealing with learners with special needs.

Southern Counties Accredited Training Centre *Initial Assessment for YTS* Portsmouth Polytechnic/Southern Counties ATC, 1986 (**4**)

This is a package designed for YTS trainers but of more general use. It contains checklists, notes on interviewing and assessment methods, sample questions and sources of information.

Stafford, D.V./DES *A 'Special' Professionalism: A Report of the FE Special Needs Teacher Training Working Group* HMSO, 1987

This is the report of the special needs teacher training working group which considers the need for training, a framework for training, award-bearing courses, a special needs

resource base and makes recommendations. It provides the whole background to current and future training needs in respect of special needs in the post-school sector.

* Wonacott, M. *Identify and Diagnose Exceptional Students* (Module L-1 of category L – serving students with special/exceptional needs, *Professional Teacher Education Module* series) American Association for Vocational Instructional Materials, Georgia, 1984 (**1,4**)

This contains materials on preparing to teach students with different abilities and needs, and on reviewing attitudes to working with a wide range of students.

* The publications marked with an asterisk are all part of an American pack, hence the definition of special and exceptional needs is not the same since it includes concepts of disadvantage from social, economic, cultural and language factors. The materials can be used as an open learning pack or with a facilitator. The activities are particularly useful and require minimal adaptation in many cases.

These publications are available from: Technical Publications Services Ltd., 5 Vines Avenue, London N3 2QD.

LEARNING
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INTRODUCTION

These young people are featured at various points in the pack, generally where they are used as examples in the exercises. You will learn a little more about them each time they appear.

Furthermore, you can use examples of your own students/trainees alongside those provided; in which case you will need to build up a similar profile of information as you go.

The case-studies are based on real students and trainees and are not intended to represent any particular type of special need. They should, instead, illustrate the complex range of interrelating factors which contribute to the special needs of each individual.

It is anticipated that you will select a range of young people to use from those provided, rather than working through the activities with every character.

It is important to stress that the starting point for meeting special education/training needs is recognising individual needs.

The information provided gives a picture of each individual, drawn from a number of sources. It is presented in a way in which those sources (for example, careers, health and education agencies) may provide information. It may be subjective and include a variety of assumptions and value judgements and therefore its accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

The format for the presentation of the information *should not* be assumed to be a good way of assembling information about learners nor is it intended to provide a model for use elsewhere. It will be helpful if facilitators spend some time discussing *critically* the way the information has been presented.

CASE-STUDIES

CASE-STUDY: MARIA

This information gives a picture of an individual, drawn from a number of sources. It is presented in a way in which those sources (for example, careers, health and education agencies) may provide information. It *does not* represent the best way of presenting information about learners and *should not* be treated as a useful model. It may be subjective and include a variety of assumptions and value judgements so its accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 16

Schools attended: local comprehensive school. Little information is available on her school career but she appears to have been fairly able both academically and in terms of her practical skills.

Physical development: she is of average stature but rather overweight. Her co-ordination is good.

Verbal communication: Maria can communicate effectively, but on meeting new people she can refuse to speak and gives strong messages, via her body language and facial expressions, that she does not wish to communicate.

Self care: Maria's appearance is most striking as she needs to improve her personal hygiene drastically. This is one of the areas of greatest need.

Public transport: independent.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: she does, in fact, have well developed literacy skills and is quite competent in this area. Unfortunately, this is not always obvious from her responses.

Numeracy: as with her literacy skills, she is quite competent, although she may not appear to be so.

Practical subjects: Maria is adept in practical areas and has a special interest in home-making activities.

Despite her ability she did not obtain any academic qualifications at school.

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: Maria's home environment is poor. Several indicators of social and economic deprivation are in evidence: poor housing, low income and a large family.

Maturity: Maria has demonstrated considerable maturity in the home environment where she has carried a lot of responsibility from an early age.

Relationships: she has shown that when she has felt confident with other people, she could develop constructive relationships with her peers. She has performed a leadership role successfully but her initial response to other adults is one of rejection until she has established a trusting relationship.

Emotional stability: she is usually calm and stable, and her sullen and rejecting appearence tends to reflect her insecurity and lack of confidence.

Interests and hobbies: Maria has not expressed any interest beyond the many demands and responsibilities she has within the family.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Preference for employment: Maria has expressed an interest in retailing.

Parental attitude to work: her parents do not see her as an independent young adult who could be employed outside the home. They offer her little support or encouragement; rather, she is subjected to considerable pressure to maintain her role of helping within the family.

CASE-STUDY: CHRIS

This information gives a picture of an individual, drawn from a number of sources. It is presented in a way in which those sources (for example, careers, health and education agencies) may provide information. It *does not* represent the best way of presenting information about learners and *should not* be treated as a useful model. It may be subjective and include a variety of assumptions and value judgements. Its accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 19

Schools attended: local day special school. He spent the last two years at a college extension course. The specialist careers officer has arranged for Chris to join a sympathetic YTS scheme, where he could be introduced to work. His achievements throughout his career reflect his improving confidence and skills as well as his ability to get on with people.

Physical development: his co-ordination is reasonable and his physical development well within the ordinary range. He is somewhat ungainly in his movements.

Verbal communication: Chris is able to communicate adequately; in fact he is talkative in the extreme, although the limited repertoire of his conversation can be boring and indicates a limitation to his intellectual ability.

Self care: he is able to care for himself independently.

Public transport: completely independent

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: he can read and write familiar words and short pieces of information. He needs help to improve his concentration and memory which limit his learning in all areas.

Numeracy: he has a basic level of skill which has been developed through the practical application of his abilities in work situations, using computer programs and in projects.

Practical subjects: he is able to complete successfully simple repetitive tasks. This has helped him to gain confidence in his achievements, but his difficulty in learning and retaining new information and skills limits his participation in off-the-job training and on work placement.

He has sat no formal examinations. IQ: overall score 88

SOCIAL INFORMAITON

Home background: Chris has a caring and supportive family with two older brothers. His father is a long-distance lorry driver and his mother a nurse, who works on night duty so she can 'keep an eye' on Chris.

Maturity: he is reliable, helpful and comes across as a mature young man although, when you get to know him, he is clearly less mature than his years.

Relationships: he gets on well with people, especially adults, who are more sympathetic to his limitations. Everyone is Chris's mate, and he needs to be reminded to kerb his enthusiasm in some situations. His peers sometimes get bored by him but his good-natured approach helps overcome this.

Emotional stability: he is stable, but sometimes over enthusiastic.

Interests and hobbies: Chris is a member of the local rugby club.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

He enjoyed a work placement in a local firm, which required him to do simple, repetitive tasks and offered a high level of supervision. He gained in confidence from the experience.

Preference for employment: Chris is happy to go along with anything which is suggested. He has said that he might like to be a driver, but is inconsistent in his preference.

Information from work experience: his placement was successful in many respects, but it was necessary for him to restrain his 'mateyness' in the work environment and to learn appropriate behaviour in work relationships.

Parental attitude to work: Chris's parents are very pleased with his progress, however small, and encourage him to do his best. They appreciate that he has limitations to his vocational potential and are pleased that he has another opportunity to get more training.

CASE-STUDY: DAVID

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 16

Schools attended: his school career was rather disrupted by moves in his home. He attended local comprehensive schools then an off-site withdrawal unit.

Physical development: within the ordinary range. His co-ordination is good.

Verbal communication: expresses himself well.

Self care: independent.

Public transport: independent.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: his literacy skills are well developed and present no problem except for occasional spellings. He avoids anything which could be difficult as he fears failure. He is generally underachieving as a result.

Numeracy: he has a basic level of competence, but avoids new and challenging tasks.

Practical subjects: he is reasonably competent across a wide range of skills, but his avoidance of new or challenging work limits his progress.

No formal qualifications.

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: David is living in an adolescent hostel at present. He had been rejected by his parents and spent much of his childhood in children's homes and in care. He experienced two unsuccessful foster placements.

Maturity: he needs to learn to accept responsibility for himself and his actions. He also needs to be reassured constantly and given attention. His general level of maturity is below his 16 years.

Relationships: David needs to develop skills in building and maintaining relationships. He experiences difficulty in accepting authority and staff working with him describe it as extremely demanding and requiring superhuman patience. Staff spend a lot of time with him, talking about his behaviour and its consequences, in the hope that they can build an understanding and trusting relationship with him. He will work alongside others, but cannot relate properly to them. He uses his preference to work alone to foster the isolation as a sense of superiority and power, and his peers tend to fear him because he is unpredictable and can be violent.

Emotional stability: he requires continuous attention and has a number of mechanisms to elicit it, from temper rages to provocation of others. He has achieved little stability in any way.

Interests and hobbies: watching videos.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Work experience: in the work situation he found it difficult to accept authority or to work properly with his work-mates.

Preference for employment: none expressed.

He has not undertaken any work experience to date as it is felt that his behaviour is too unpredictable and complex. The staff at his hostel are keen for him to undertake any form of constructive daytime occupation.

CASE-STUDY: SALLY

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 19

Schools attended (last five years): a day school for delicate children then a day school for severe learning difficulties and finally a residential boarding school for children with moderate learning difficulties. She has made considerable progress during her rather disrupted school career, developing self-reliance, independence and a number of her practical and creative skills. She now has a clear idea of what she wants to work towards in the future.

Physical development: a petite young woman, she is slightly built. She has good co-ordination.

Verbal communication: she can express herself clearly and is easy to understand.

Self care: she is completely independent, very concerned for her appearance and wears well applied make-up and fashionable clothing.

Public transport: completely independent.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: enjoys writing; maintains a large correspondence with 'old friends', mainly former teachers and social workers. Some difficulties with spelling but most of what is written is understandable. Can read and follow written instructions.

Numeracy: manages simple addition and subtraction and can cope adequately with money.

Practical subjects: keen and able cook, art and design work; drama and music can be outstanding when compared to peers.

No formal examinations sat. IQ: 87 (four years before)

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: recently moved in with mother and four younger siblings. Previously had a residential placement in a convent for women with severe and moderate learning difficulties. Prior to that, she lived with foster parents near her own home. Her mother recently returned to this country after several years abroad, is now resettled and Sally has moved back with her, but she talks of moving abroad again. Two other siblings are in care.

Maturity: usually comes over as a mature young woman but can be very immature.

Relationships: has a fluctuating relationship with mother; sometimes says she cannot stand her and wants to move out to a flat of her own. She is very fond of all her siblings and is often left to look after them. Visits her brothers, who are in care, regularly. Has developed some strong relationships with peers, but her frequent moves have disrupted them. Can enlist support and sympathy from her peers and act as a leader in the group. Forms strong attachments to teachers/social workers, etc. She is demanding but her pleasant and appealing personality means that she is popular.

Emotional stability: can have extreme outbursts of temper, mainly shouting, swearing and throwing things, but does not usually act aggressively towards people. Most usual response is to rush out or lock herself away. Always quick to apologise afterwards. She can be very attention seeking and consequently presents a management problem.

Interests and hobbies: fashion, art and drama

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Work experience: in a laundry, and at a residential establishment – maid and kitchen duties.

Preference for employment: wants to be a fashion designer.

Information from work experience: works quite well most of the time but easily gets bored. Tended to complain that the work was hard and boring but she could do it all.

Parental attitude to work: mother wants Sally at home to look after the other children.

CASE-STUDY: SANDEEP

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 18

Schools attended in last five years: a day comprehensive school then a day special school for children with emotional and behavioural disturbance. His achievements during his school career were considerable until the age of 14, and subsequently, he has made good progress in music and art history.

Physical development: average height, but rather overweight. His hand/eye co-ordination has become rather unsteady, which he finds frustrating.

Verbal communication: he can express himself articulately and understands all that is said.

Self care: can be independent, but personal hygiene is poor at times. This is sometimes an early sign of a bout of depression.

Public transport: independent except when depressed when he becomes confused.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: reads and writes within normal range.

Numeracy: he was studying for GCE 'O' levels and was making satisfactory progress until hospitalisation at age 14 for periods of severe depression.

Practical subjects: enjoys music and art which he was studying for 'O' level GCE. Now experiences difficulty with co-ordination which affects standard of art work and CDT work.

Examinations: no formal qualifications. IQ: 113 at 11 years

Comments: most reports suggest that he is academically able, but when he feels under stress, he becomes depressed and withdrawn. A vocationally oriented course, which should not be too demanding, has been recommended.

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: lives with parents and older brother. Parents are caring and very concerned about Sandeep. They tend to be overprotective of him, and find him very difficult to understand. His parents hope he will some day be 'cured'. They feel a strong sense of guilt and sometimes indulge Sandeep.

Maturity: immature and dependent.

Relationships: he is generally obedient with adults but rarely takes the initiative in communications. He depends on his parents for most things but has little to do with his elder brother, who has tried to involve him in his own hobbies and interests until giving up in frustration. His brother now devotes much more attention to his girlfriend. He has one 'friend', who he works with and sits with during breaks, but tends to remain aloof from most of his peers.

Emotional stability: tends to be withdrawn and distant. He is lethargic and is motivated only when listening to music. He is usually calm, but on rare occasions he can become frustrated and angry. However, his outbursts are short and he usually ends in tears. He presents a management problem because he does not demand attention and is easy to ignore, yet he needs to be motivated and to receive constant prompting. He could achieve much more.

Interests and hobbies: enjoys listening to music.

Comments: he attends the local psychiatric clinic for regular check-ups. He says his medication makes him feel tired and he has frequent headaches. He says he finds it hard to concentrate.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

No work experience.

Preference for employment: he would like to work in the music industry in some capacity, but he doesn't think it is very likely.

Parental attitude: his parents do not want him to work yet and have said they will look after him at home if necessary. They really want him to complete his education and get some useful qualifications for the future, when they hope he will be able to get a good job.

CASE-STUDY: GLADSTONE

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 17

Schools attended (last five years): day school for children with moderate learning difficulties, including a college link course. He was a popular and lively character at school who made good progress and developed effective if unusual methods of communicating for himself.

Physical development: tall, well-built young man who has good co-ordination.

Verbal communication: he uses mime, gestures and his own system of drawings to communicate as he has a stammer and has difficulty expressing himself verbally. This makes him very frustrated, which in turn increases his stammer.

Self care: independent, but needs reminders over personal hygiene. His clothing is fashionable, but tends to be dirty and changed infrequently.

Public transport: independent, unless he needs to ask for a ticket or destination, when he would rather walk.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: recognises his name and a few common signs but cannot read sentences. He can write a few known words and phrases. He has received special help with literacy during his school career and has made some progress. He has developed an effective system of cartoon-like drawings to communicate, together with his mime and gestures.

Numeracy: he has reasonable mechanical arithmetic skills and copes well with money. He has shown considerable interest in, and aptitude for, computing skills.

Practical skills: he is very well co-ordinated in both gross and fine motor areas. He draws well and enjoys most crafts but dislikes cooking, which he considers to be women's work. His main talent is in playing sports.

Examinations: passed CSE art. IQ: verbal score 62, non-verbal 90 (school leavers report).

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: lives at home with mother and four younger siblings. One other sister is at the same school for children with moderate learning difficulties. His father is unemployed and periodically leaves home. His mother works early mornings, cleaning to help support the family; she has been described as 'a bit simple'. The family is a close-knit one, and the maternal grandparents live down the road and play a significant and supporting role in the family.

Maturity: Gladstone is a physically mature young man whose behaviour sometimes belies his appearance. He can behave in a reliable and sensible way, but may revert to tantrums when frustrated.

Relationships: he gets on well with most adults and his relationships are helped by his sense of humour. He is very fond of his mother and has a special attachment to his grandfather, who was a keen cricketer in his youth. He is not particularly interested in the younger siblings, most of whom he thinks are boring, but one younger brother is also good at sports and Gladstone tends to spend most of the time with him. He is popular with his peers, despite his communication difficulty, partially because of his sporting prowess and partially because he is 'a clown'.

Emotional stability: he is generally amenable and good-humoured, but can become frustrated, when he has been known to lash out at both staff and other learners. His physical size and strength can be intimidating and he knows and sometimes uses this when he feels threatened. He is quite demanding of staff attention when he needs help, but quickly loses interest and 'turns off' if he feels he cannot do what is required of him. He presents a management problem with his fooling around, which can disrupt and involve the other learners. His level of literacy and verbal communication skills also present difficulties.

Interests and hobbies: all sports.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Work experience: as a shelf filler in a local shop. He walked out after two days.

Preference for employment: he has not expressed any preference, but he doesn't want to work in a shop again.

Information from work experience: he needed a lot of help with working out where things go. His personal hygiene was unacceptable for shop work, but the main problem came when he was caught juggling tins to entertain the other staff. The manager reprimanded him, he tried to argue back, but lost his temper and threw the remaining tins at the manager before leaving.

Parental attitude: his mother wants him to get a job and earn some money. She thinks he should work on the docks, like his father used to. She does not appear to appreciate his limitations.

CASE-STUDY: RONKE

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 19

Schools attended (last five years): day special school for children with physical and neurological impairments. Ronke was popular and successful at school, and has achieved considerable self-confidence and independence.

Physical development: young woman of small stature. Ronke is a user of a wheelchair, in which she is relatively independent. Her co-ordination is good. She uses various aids and adapted equipment to help her as she has limited strength in her arms.

Verbal communication: an articulate young woman.

Self care: needs assistance with bathing, dressing and going to the toilet. Can manage to wash unaided but tires quickly when attempting physically demanding tasks.

Transport: she is hoping to get a car which she can drive herself, so she can be independent. At present she travels in any vehicle which can accommodate a wheelchair. She went to school on local authority transport. Her parents have a specially adapted car.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: well above average written work.

Numeracy: within the average range, but she has experienced some difficulty in this area relative to her ability level and her attainment in other areas.

Practical subjects: can achieve satisfactory results in cookery, craft, design and technology sessions using her adapted tools and equipment.

Examinations: passed five GCE 'O' levels and two CSEs. She completes her work quickly and easily and tends to become bored if it is insufficiently challenging.

IQ: 118 (verbal score 123)

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: Ronke lives with her parents in a large detached house which has been specially adapted for her. She has an elder sister who is at college, studying art. The family are financially secure and both parents are professional people. Her mother, a solicitor, has not worked since Ronke was born, but is starting a small business from her home. The family is caring and supportive.

Maturity: she is slightly less mature than others of her age.

Relationships: she has a warm relationship with her immediate family. Her relationship with her sister was particularly close and she misses her now she lives away at college. She used to be included in her sister's group of friends and was a part of the normal teenage scene so, as a result, her relationships with other young people are good and she has good interpersonal skills. She has a small group of close friends at school and they visit each other out of school. She gets on well with most staff, and has an open and easy relationship with people she knows.

Emotional stability: she has developed good self-control and the temper tantrums of her childhood are a thing of the past. She is more able than most of the people she is with, and is able to manipulate situations and people to cause disruption but often manages to appear uninvolved in the disruption although she was the initiator. She does not demand attention.

Interests and hobbies: reading, films and the theatre.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Work experience: doing basic clerical and receptionist duties, including answering the telephone.

Preference for employment: journalism.

Information from work experience: a successful placement. She carried out all the duties satisfactorily and received an excellent report from her employer, but she found it rather boring and lacking in challenge.

Parental attitude to work: the aspirations of the whole family are high and the parents expect her to gain worthwhile employment. They encourage her to develop her interests.

CASE-STUDY: MICHAEL

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 16

Schools attended: comprehensive until 12 years when he moved to a boarding school for children with emotional and behavioural disturbance. His major achievements at school were a considerable improvement in his self control and his ability to behave in an acceptable manner. He completed a work placement which helped to improve his self-esteem.

Physical development: a well-developed and well-co-ordinated young man.

Verbal communication: his speech is clear and his understanding good.

Self care: he is reasonably good at keeping himself clean and is an ardent user of after shave. He tends not to care or look after his possessions, including clothes.

Public transport: completely independent.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: he can read and write short phrases and simple sentences using familiar vocabulary, but this is the area with which he has major problems. His reading age is several years below his chronological age. He uses a series of well practised strategies, such as questioning to try to mask his inadequate skills since he is very keen not to appear to be inadequate.

Numeracy: he can carry out simple mechanical arithmetic but, beyond this, has problems. He uses similar strategies to hide this; for example, he can easily find out the time, although he has difficulties reading a clock face or relating the figures on a digital display. He copes with money without the real numeracy skill to back it up.

Practical skills: he is quite good at most practical activities, but careless. He needs to learn to attend to detail and develop a sense of perfectionism. His observation skills are poor and he finds it difficult to judge his own work. He is keen to get things finished and not be left behind, rather than think about the end product.

Examinations: his school did not wish to subject the learners to the pressure of public examinations, so the emphasis was on social skills and work experience.

IQ: verbal score 90, non-verbal score 102.

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: his family is in turmoil with frequent aggression and violence and his parents see him as fermenting the problems within the family. He does not get on with his younger brother, who usurped his position as the youngest and has been aggressive towards him. His family lack social skills themselves, and he has not learned the basic 'rules' of behaviour from them. The family provide him with no support or encouragement and feel he should work his problems out for himself.

Maturity: he is about two years behind his peers in general, but is very much less mature emotionally.

Relationships: he does not get on with his family. Communications tend to be focused around rows and usually end in violence. He has reasonable relationships with staff, to whom he can refer and relate quite well, but his relationships with his peers are poor with frequent arguments and squabbles. He cannot make friends because he lacks the skills to do so.

Emotional stability: he has now developed some degree of self-control and has learned acceptable 'classroom behaviour', but he has poor self-esteem and lacks confidence. He presents a management problem as he tends to overact grossly and make a great scene. He is instrumental in stirring up trouble and has bullied others. He needs constant encouragement and reinforcement from the staff, but he finds it very hard to co-operate with others, although he needs to refer to the staff for reassurance throughout his work and finds it hard to work alone. Anything new must be presented to him very slowly and carefully as he lacks the confidence to experiment.

Interests and hobbies: watching TV and videos.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

He had work experience in a local carpentry firm, he managed to stick it out and his self-esteem seemed to develop as a result.

Preference for employment: carpentry (his father was a carpenter).

Information from work experience: much of his work was satisfactory but his main problems were related to his carelessness. His employers also commented on his lack of initiative, his need for reassurance and the general demanding nature of his personality.

Parental attitudes: his parents want him to get a job and to earn some money. They do not see themselves as having a role in helping him gain employment. They cannot really see the point in YTS as it is not the proper job which they want him to get.

CASE-STUDY: LISCA

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 18

Schools attended: day special school for children with physical and neurological impairment, which involved some integration in the local comprehensive school. She attended a college link course during her final year. She made satisfactory progress at school although her attendance was rather erratic, and has become a little more confident.

Physical development: has good co-ordination and she enjoys and is good at swimming. Her stature is slightly shortened due to her curved spine.

Physical needs: she requires support while sitting to support her severely curved spine, to prevent further curvature. She has asthma which sometimes restricts her mobility, concentration and attendance. She can manage to read large print, but has a visual impairment and wears thick glasses.

Verbal communication: she can communicate well, but has a very high-pitched voice.

Self care: independent. Clean and well dressed.

Public transport: used local authority transport for school and college. She can use public transport if accompanied.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: she can read, but is rather slow as she must use magnifiers. She finds simple material and short sentences easier. Her reading age when last tested was 11.9 years. She can write reasonably although features of her writing are poor spelling, short sentences and simple structures. She can concentrate well for short periods but the limits of this attention span affect all of her educational progress.

Numeracy: this is her preferred activity. She has all basic arithmetic skills and copes well with money and time.

Practical skills: her co-ordination is good so she is quite reasonable at most practical activities, but she tends to rush her work. She has difficulties if she is required to remember a complex series of instructions.

Examinations: none taken. IQ: full scale 96.

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: she lives at home with her elderly mother who herself has poor vision due to cataracts. She has no sibling. Her mother is dependent on her to help her around the house and to provide her with company. She is very protective of her and is anxious about anything which she considers puts Lisca at risk.

Maturity: Lisca is somewhat immature. She is over-dependent on adults.

Relationships: she is very fond of, and attached to, her mother. She gets on quite well with most adults but she is very quiet, dreamy and undemanding, and finds it difficult to build relationships with her peers, preferring to work alone. She suffered some abusive comments from local children and prefers to keep herself to herself. She is rather withdrawn.

Emotional stability: she has a calm and even temperament, with a tendency to withdraw and dream. She presents difficulties in management due to her limited attention span and undemanding nature and she appears to be underachieving in most areas. She needs help to boost her confidence and to learn to take the initiative.

Interests and hobbies: watching TV and listening to the radio at home. She attends a special swimming club each week, travelling by minibus.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

She missed two planned work experiences due to asthma. It was felt that perhaps she did not wish to attend and colluded with her mother over her absences.

Preference for employment: she is very unsure about this and feels she would like to work with animals or children.

Parental attitude: her mother does not want her to go to work. She does not object to proposed college and YTS schemes which she refers to as 'school'.

CASE-STUDY: IVAN

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 23

Schools attended: he spent two terms at special boarding school at the age of eight, then moved to a partial hearing unit attached to the local comprehensive school. He made considerable progress at school and was successful in public examinations. He attended the local FE college for one term before 'dropping out'.

Physical development: normal; his co-ordination is good.

Verbal communication: he has learned to sign, using the British sign system, and has been taught to lip-read, but finds this difficult and exhausting. He has a profound hearing loss with some residual hearing. His speech is very difficult to understand, which he finds frustrating.

Self care: completely independent.

Transport: owns his own 'banger'.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: good; writes fluently, but sometimes uses some unusual sentence structures when writing.

Numeracy: good; passed CSE grade 1.

Practical subjects: can achieve excellent results in craft design and technology. He pays close attention to detail and finishes work to a high standard. However, he describes himself as not much good at art.

Examinations: four CSEs, two GCE 'O' levels. IQ: 118 at 16 years

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: Ivan lived in a children's home from the age of eight but he left the home at 18 and moved into a flat with two others, although he maintains some contact with the children's home and receives some support from them. He maintained contact with his mother for a few years, but this gradually disappeared. He was always quite independent at the children's home.

Maturity: he has really grown up since he started to live in his own home and is quite sensible in his approach to most things.

Relationships: he was a rebellious teenager and tended to question adults all the time, but had a strong relationship with a husband and wife who were houseparents in the children's home. He was part of a close-knit group who were all partially hearing. Since leaving school, he has developed more relationships with hearing people. He is outgoing and lively and makes friends quite easily despite his hearing impairment. He has a steady girl friend (from school – she also has partial hearing) and they are planning to find a flat together.

Emotional stability: he has good self-control and is reasonably stable. He experiences occasional frustration when he has difficulties communicating.

Interests and hobbies: watching sports, TV, going to nightclubs, model-making.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Previous employment: he has worked for a number of local building firms and has done various odd jobs for the last few years. The money was quite good and the work varied at first, but he has become rather disillusioned and feels he is wasting his abilities.

Preference for employment: he would like to become a skilled craftsman, possibly a cabinet maker/carpenter, and start up his own business.

CASE-STUDY: DANA

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 18

Schools attended: day special school for children with moderate learning difficulties and she attended a college link on a general education course. Her main achievements at school have related to her interest in cars and mechanical things.

Physical development: she has reasonable co-ordination, but is small for her age and physically immature.

Verbal communication: her speech is clear but contains some immature vocabulary. She can understand on most occasions, but sometimes appears to be confused by multiple or complex messages.

Self care: she has a major hygiene problem, shared with most of her family. Her clothing is ill-fitting, dirty and usually in need of repair.

Public transport: she is independent on familiar routes.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: she can read simple statements, but her approach is hesitant and mechanical and her comprehension is particularly poor. She has tried hard when writing, but it is cramped, badly formed and frequently unintelligible.

Numeracy: she asks for pages of adding up sums, which she can do well. However, she has difficulties with everything beyond simple computation.

Practical skills: she is very interested in cars and things mechanical. She will put considerable effort and attention into metal work and relevant parts of craft design and technology. In other areas, though, she tends to be lazy most of the time and needs prompting to speed up, and encouragement to take a pride in her work.

Examinations: none sat. IQ: 85

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: she is a member of a large family; mother, father (currently unemployed) and seven siblings. She is the fourth child and the youngest has Downs syndrome.

The family is poor, chaotic, but loving and caring.

Maturity: she is immature, physically and emotionally.

Relationships: she is very close to her mother and several of her siblings, but has some difficulties in sharing both attention and materials with the others. She cares for, takes out and enjoys looking after the youngest child. She tends to have been happiest with other younger children, although she has made some relationships with her peers. Her brother works at a garage and she likes to spend her time there when possible.

Emotional stability: she is generally fairly stable and slow to arouse, but she has been known to bully youngsters when unhappy.

Interests and hobbies: cars.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Work experience in a garage where she carries out general duties.

Preference for employment: anything with cars.

Information from work experience: she was keen and interested but took a long time to do what was requested. She needed to be shown the same things many times and to be reminded to complete things.

Parental attitude: they are happy for her to do what she wants, but they do not really understand the options that are open to her.

CASE-STUDY: RICHARD

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 17

Schools attended: special day school for children who have visual impairment. He has revealed an aptitude for, and interest in, cooking, which he has developed well during his school career.

Physical development: within the normal range. His co-ordination is reasonable.

Verbal communication: he can communicate adequately, but is usually rather quiet.

Self care: he needs to be reminded about personal hygiene, but can be independent. He does not look after his clothes; this is done by his father.

Public transport: he is anxious when travelling by public transport but can travel with others.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: he can read and write short phrases and known words, but he needs help to develop his literacy skills. His last reading age was nine years. He uses various forms of magnifiers.

Numeracy: he can carry out basic arithmetical operations and manages money, but has difficulty with time.

Practical activities: his greatest strength is in cooking, which he enjoys, is successful at and well-motivated in. In other cases he needs frequent reminders and reassurance to complete tasks and is rather slow.

IQ: full scale 89

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: he lives at home with his father and elder brother. His father is rather impatient with Richard, and tends to be outspoken with both of his sons. Richard is frightened of his father.

Maturity: very immature; he resorts to sulking when things go wrong.

Relationships: he has something of a love hate relationship with his father. Although he is often frightened by his father, he has some admiration and respect for him. His relationship with other adults is quite acceptable but he tends to be either shy and quiet or rowdy. With his peer group he tends to be something of a loner although he has formed relationships with one or two others. He doesn't really like large groups in which he feels insecure, but occasionally gets carried away and joins in with rowdy behaviour, and he is sometimes used by others who enjoy arousing him, then watching him get into trouble.

Emotional stability: he has improved his self-control but this can be variable and he is often quiet or sulky when reprimanded, but when he does get wound up, he doesn't know when to stop. He needs reassurance over his work. He needs special magnifying aids and individually prepared materials. He also needs to be prompted and to receive reassurance while he is working and has to have encouragement and support to work with others.

Interests and hobbies: cooking, pop music.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

He had a period of work experience in a canteen.

Preference for employment: chef.

Information from work experience: he managed to carry out most tasks although he was slow and needed reminding. They would be prepared to have him back. He will need to improve his cleanliness and time keeping, and his response to correction was not satisfactory. It took him rather a long while to learn where everything was kept.

Parental attitude: his father wants him to be employed and is rather unsympathetic to his special needs. He expects that both sons will work in, then eventually take over, his bakery business and he can't see any point in further education or training as he believes he can pass on his skills to Richard.